


PEPC Project ID: 23811, DocumentID: 35583
Correspondence: 39

Author Information

Keep Private: No
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Organization: Unidentified School  Member
Organization Type: S - State Government
Address: [REDACTED]
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Correspondence Information

Status: Reviewed Park Correspondence Log:
Date Sent: Date Received: 09/30/2010
Number of Signatures: 1 Form Letter: No
Contains Request(s): No Type: Park Form
Notes:

Correspondence Text

I've enclosed some letters my class have written about the plan. I read them the plan to inform them what's going on. I have been teaching for 30 years. I teach my students to RESPECT and care for Yosemite when they visit. This plan is against everthing I teach them.
This is their reactions after I've read the plan.
Thank you for your attention,

[REDACTED]
P.S. Please take in mind what future generation WANTS TOO!

[REDACTED]
Student's letters and drawings are included in the administrative record. Common substantive message is:
"Please don't cut down trees."

PEPC Project ID: 23811, DocumentID: 35583
Correspondence: 38

Author Information

Keep Private: No

Name:

Organization:

Organization Type: I - Unaffiliated Individual

Address:

E-mail:

Correspondence Information

Status: Reviewed

Park Correspondence Log:

Date Sent: 09/14/2010

Date Received: 09/30/2010

Number of Signatures: 1

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Type: Park Form

Notes:

Correspondence Text

Why not use the Northern California Area for instance the places where the Lumber Companies work, to get their money. These are healthy trees. People come all over the United States to Yosemite National Park to see the beatuy nature has to offer and not to see just rocks and dirt! If they start cutting down trees, all the animal wildlife will be affected. The animals rely on shade, shelter, and homes from the trees. You CAN NOT let this happen to Yosemite! It was a beautiful park just how nature intends it to look like and for many years to come!

DON'T MESS WITH MOTHER NATURE!!

[REDACTED]



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY ENGINEER DISTRICT, SACRAMENTO
CORPS OF ENGINEERS
1325 J STREET
SACRAMENTO CA 95814-2922

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

September 14, 2010

Regulatory Division SPK-2010-01005

RECEIVED
SVM-S-037
SEP 21 2010
pg 1 of 2
YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

Don Neubacher
Superintendent
Yosemite National Park
P.O. Box 577
Yosemite, California 95389-0577

Dear Mr. Neubacher:

We are responding to your September 1, 2010 request for comments on the Environmental Assessment for the Scenic Vista Management Plan for Yosemite National Park, July 2010. This project concerns the non-wilderness portion of the whole park which is located in and around the Merced and Tuolumne Rivers within the eastern portions of Tuolumne, Mariposa, and Madera Counties, California.

The Corps of Engineers' jurisdiction within the study area is under the authority of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act for the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States. Waters of the United States include, but are not limited to, rivers, perennial or intermittent streams, lakes, ponds, wetlands, vernal pools, marshes, wet meadows, ditches, and seeps. Project features that result in the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States will require Department of the Army authorization prior to starting work.

To ascertain the extent of waters on the project site, the applicant should prepare a wetland delineation, in accordance with the "Minimum Standards for Acceptance of Preliminary Wetland Delineations", under "Jurisdiction" on our website at the address below, and submit it to this office for verification. A list of consultants that prepare wetland delineations and permit application documents is also available on our website at the same location.

The range of alternatives considered for this project should include alternatives that avoid impacts to wetlands or other waters of the United States. Every effort should be made to avoid project features which require the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States. In the event it can be clearly demonstrated there are no practicable alternatives to filling waters of the United States, mitigation plans should be developed to compensate for the unavoidable losses resulting from project implementation.

If waters of the United States are going to be impacted, cultural resource sites within the defined federal permit area will need to be evaluated according to the standards of the National

RECEIVED

SVM-S-037

SEP 21 2010

pg 2 of 2

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

-2-

Environmental Policy Act. All eligible or potentially eligible cultural resource sites in the permit area will be subject to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, 1966, as amended. The Corps of Engineers must also comply with the terms and conditions of the Federal Endangered Species Act with regards to our permitting process.

At this time, the Corps of Engineers cannot make a determination if this project will or will not need authorization from our office. The Environmental Assessment mentions waters of the United States are within the project area, identifies that "mechanized equipment use" will be necessary to restore some of the vistas; however, it does not guarantee that waters of the United States will be completely avoided. In order to determine if an authorization from our office is necessary, we will need detailed information about each vista site. Specifically, inform us where the sites are located, how the scenic vistas are to be restored, and then we will make a determination if an authorization is required from our office.

Please refer to identification number SPK-2010-01005 in any correspondence concerning this project. If you have any questions, please contact me at the letterhead address, email *Kathy.Norton@usace.army.mil*, or telephone 916-557-5260. For more information regarding our program, please visit our website at *www.spk.usace.army.mil/regulatory.html*. Thank you for allowing us to review your document.

Sincerely,

ORIGINAL
SIGNED

Kathy Norton
Sr. Project Manager
California South Branch

Copy furnished

✓ Sue Clark, Compliance Specialist, Yosemite National Park, P.O. Box 700, 5083 Foresta Road, El Portal, California 95318-0700

**PEPC Project ID: 23811, DocumentID: 35583
Correspondence: 36**

Author Information

Keep Private: No
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Correspondence Information

Status: New Park Correspondence Log:
Date Sent: Date Received: 09/14/2010
Number of Signatures: 1 Form Letter: No
Contains Request(s): No Type: Fax
Notes: Child's drawings on file in original Record of 100 year old and 230 year old trees and someone cutting them down.

Correspondence Text

Why are ou doing this? it's just not right. You people are doing the wrong thing to nature. Iam not ok with this!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

...Not Happen I think you're destroying the whole world!!! Stop Cutting Down the Trees!!!!!!
Save Yosemite National Park

Signed



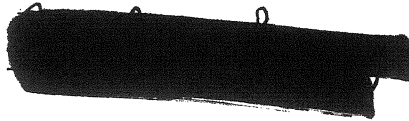
Yosemite National Park

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Project Name: Scenic Management Plan RECEIVED: SVP-S-#17
(Please use a separate form for each Project you are commenting on) SEP 15 2010 P8 104

Your Name:



Age 8 10 soon 11

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

COMMENTS

This is an outrage!!! This plan is to restore and save. If a branch is blocking a view than cut it. You know why? Because people do not care if it look natural!!! A lot of people are rebelling and I will write a strong strong worded letter to the Pres. if they base to!

IT'S NOT WORTH

IT!

PEPC Project ID: 23811, DocumentID: 35583
Correspondence: 35

Author Information

Keep Private: No

Name: [REDACTED]

Organization: [REDACTED]

Organization Type: I - Unaffiliated Individual

Address: [REDACTED]

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Correspondence Information

Status: New

Park Correspondence Log:

Date Sent: 09/17/2010

Date Received: 09/17/2010

Number of Signatures: 1

Form Letter: No

Contains Request(s): No

Type: Web Form

Notes:

Correspondence Text

Superintendent Neubacher
Yosemite National Park
Attention: Scenic Vista Management Plan
P.O. Box 577
Yosemite, CA 95389
www.parkplanning@nps.gov/YOSE

Dear Superintendent Neubacher,

After reading the extensive plan, I feel the Alternative 3 would be the best alternative that was offered.

However, I am concerned about the extent to which the vistas are cleared and would this lead to them to become too city like and sterile in appearance.

In my opinion, the rehabilitation project at the Tunnel View Overlook has made this area lose it's rustic character and natural look. The plan did not take into consideration that photographers used certain trees

to frame the view of the valley and those trees were removed. While there is more viewing area for visitors, removal of those trees has changed the character of the vista and made it look too bare. Retention of those trees would not have had a huge effect on expanding the viewing area. It has not helped that much of the native plantings did not survive and have not been replaced.

Figure 11-5 The sketch of Washburn Point demonstrated how retention of trees can enhance a view. Hopefully, this example will be a standard for vista clearing throughout the park and that a repeat of the Tunnel View will be prevented.

I am also concerned about keeping an idealized landscape where there would be vistas that are free of buildings and structures in the distance view. While the Ahwahnee adds to viewing pleasure, there are structures in the park that need to remain hidden.

I have visited many National Parks and part of the visitor experience that is important to me is the ability to drive through the park and stop at the many vistas to get an over view of the park before I park the car for an extended time and hike or walk the area.

On page III-132 the plan states "These studies demonstrate the importance of scenic driving and suggest that roadways and vehicles are an integral means of experiencing a park, in addition to providing transport. For example, Hallo and Manning (2009) found that automobiles provided visitors with opportunities to view scenery, explore the park, and experience the park with others in Acadia National Park. A similar study conducted in Yosemite National Park found that automobiles provide visitors the freedom to determine their own travel schedule to see what they want, when they want (White and Aquino 2008)"

However, in Yosemite, many of the areas that you could formerly pull off your car, so you can safely take in the view, have been removed. And, the ones that have been retained have been curbed and paved which makes the area more restrictive to parking. While this plan will open more vistas to view, nowhere in the plan has it been mentioned that viewing areas where you can park your car will be replaced or added.

The reason that I picked Alternate three is that it is a more conservative way to go. I do not want Yosemite to become too manicured and start looking like a city park not a natural area.

I would also like to take this time to mention a problem with the notification process. For years I have been on both the electronic and paper notification list and there are still times that I have not been notified about public scoping and comment periods. I never received a notice of the public scoping time for this plan nor when the plan was available for comment and only found out a few days ago when a friend emailed me about the plan and the comment period. This did not allow me to read the plan as extensively as I would have wished to and made it difficult to write a comment. I know that I am not the only person who this has happened to.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

PEPC Project ID: 23811, DocumentID: 35583
Correspondence: 34

Author Information

Keep Private: No
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[REDACTED]
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E-mail: [REDACTED]

Correspondence Information

Status: New Park Correspondence Log:
Date Sent: 09/17/2010 Date Received: 09/17/2010
Number of Signatures: 1 Form Letter: No
Contains Request(s): No Type: Web Form
Notes:

Correspondence Text

Tehipite Chapter Yosemite Committee
Sierra Club
c/o:
George Whitmore
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

17 September 2010

Superintendent
Yosemite National Park
Attn: Scenic Vista Management Plan EA
P.O. Box 577
Yosemite, CA 95389

I will attempt to paste this message onto the PEPC web site. However, because of problems with that site, I

am also emailing it to yose_planning@nps.gov. Because of technical problems in the past, I am copying this to myself in an attempt to determine whether it appears to have transmitted properly.

If these electronic attempts appear to have failed, this will be faxed to 209/379-1294.

Sir:

These are comments on the Scenic Vista Management Plan EA, dated July 2010.

The following comments are submitted on behalf of the Tehipite Chapter of the Sierra Club. The Tehipite Chapter encompasses all of Yosemite National Park. Thank you for this opportunity to make suggestions. We trust that you will find our comments to be of use in your efforts to protect the visitor experience and the natural resources of Yosemite National Park.

This is not an easy document to comment on. In going back and forth through it, trying to get a sense of what is being proposed, we find that clarity seems to have become buried in a mass of verbiage and technical jargon. With that in mind, it is possible that our below comments, both supportive and otherwise, are based on misunderstanding. We wish it were otherwise, but this is the best we can do, considering the difficulty of coming to grips with this EA.

An attempt to analyze differences among the four action alternatives is confounded by the fact that each action alternative identifies a distinctly different number of "vistas considered for initial clearing". We can discern no rationale for arrival at any of these numbers, nor can we discern that any given number has any bearing on the environmental impact of the alternative. Comparison of the action alternatives would have been facilitated if the same number of vistas were proposed for all action alternatives, letting the analysis focus on more substantive issues. (Failure to present alternatives which have been constructed in a rational way is a problem common to most Yosemite planning processes.)

This is supposed to be a vista management plan. Some issues were not addressed because they were considered to be beyond the scope of a vista management plan. Yet removal of trees apparently would follow prescriptions in the Fire Management Plan. The FMP is largely a fuels management plan. We ask what does fuels management have to do with vista management? The fact that fuels management is being commingled with vista management makes us very uneasy about the entire approach to vista management. (See p. II-17, Table II-5, which gives a particular site as an example.)

Going back to comments we made on the Draft Fire Management Plan, we felt that fuels management was suspect because too many large logs were going to the lumber mills. It would be easier to accept the fuels management plans if the conversion of Yosemite trees to merchantable lumber were not part of the equation. Now we again find ourselves in the same situation---it would be easier to accept the vista management plan if the conversion of Yosemite trees to merchantable lumber, under Fire Management Plan criteria, were not part of the equation.

If large trees are going to be taken out for vista management purposes, that is one thing. It is entirely something else if they are to be taken out as part of a fuels reduction program. Especially if they are to be converted to cash at the lumber mill.

In going through the document, we noticed a number of errors. We finally started writing them down, as there appeared to be a fair number. What follows is just the last few we noticed. We made no attempt to go back looking for the ones we had noticed earlier.

Corrections:

p. (Italic) xiii, Contents. Actions or Alternatives Considered but Dismissed is on p. II-16, not II-18.

p. III-22 Lower Montane Forest, bottom of page. The first sentence appears to have reversed references to east and west, saying "east" when it means west, and saying "westward" when it means eastward.

p. III-26 Exotic Species, upper portion of page. Again, direction appears to be reversed. The reference to "eastern" side of the park probably means western side of the park.

One of the more interesting errors was a reference to the Generals Highway. We are not aware that Yosemite has a road by this name.

Now that we have the negative comments out of the way, we wish to make it clear that we support efforts to preserve and restore the scenic values for which Yosemite was first set aside. Too many years have gone by with too little being done to protect these scenic resources. As a result, they have been seriously degraded. Ideally, a more rational planning process would have been initiated years ago. Because this was not done, and routine clearing projects were not conducted in a timely manner, we now are confronted with a semi-emergency. As the trees get larger, more and more people (including us) are reluctant to see them cut, and the scenic resources are degraded still further.

Bottom line: Please continue with your efforts to protect and restore scenic resources in Yosemite, but please separate these efforts from the Fire Management Plan. So long as the two plans are commingled, the SVMP will be suspect.

Thank you for seeking public comments on this project. We trust that you will find our comments to be useful.

Please send all future Yosemite planning documents to the Chair of the Sierra Club Tehipite Chapter Yosemite Committee. Hard copy is preferred. The address of the Chair, George Whitmore, is above.

George Whitmore, Chair
Tehipite Chapter Yosemite Committee
Sierra Club

PEPC Project ID: 23811, DocumentID: 35583
Correspondence: 33

Author Information

Keep Private: No
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Correspondence Information

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Date Sent: 09/17/2010 Date Received: 09/17/2010
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Contains Request(s): No Type: Web Form
Notes:

Correspondence Text

September 17, 2010

Don Neubacher
US Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Yosemite National Park
P.O. Box 577
Yosemite, CA 95389

Project: Scenic Vista Management Plan for Yosemite National Park ? L7617 (YOSE)

District Reference No: 20100685

Dear Mr. Neubacher:

The San Joaquin Valley Air Basin (SJVAB) is currently designated as extreme non-attainment for ozone and non-attainment for PM_{2.5} for federal standards. To aid the National Park Service (NPS) in reducing project related air impacts, the San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District (District) offers the following comments regarding the Scenic Vista Management Plan (Plan) for Yosemite National Park (Park):

1) Specific impacts on air quality will be dependent on the method used for disposing the accumulated natural vegetation. Though it is important to maintain scenic vistas, maintain property in a fire safe condition, and preserve wildlife habitat, the disposal method selected can adversely effect local and regional air pollution. The District recognizes the role of prescribed burning in maintaining a healthy ecosystem; however the District is concerned with the potential impacts of smoke on Park visitors, employees, and those that live in areas that may become impacted by smoke.

a) Although the proposed Alternatives identified in the Plan limit the use of prescribed burning to clear the various vistas and refers to the Yosemite Fire Management Plan (FMP) as the guidance document, the District asks the NPS to take a proactive role in reducing both the amount and impact of smoke. Proactive mitigation, including mechanical treatment and/or removal of fuels from planned burns, where possible, as well as, following through on the commitment to follow Title 17 of the California Code of Regulations (further discussed below), will reduce both the amount and impact of smoke.

b) Alternatives to burning may include chipping, mulching, composting, or recycling through a local landfill or disposal service. In some areas, chipped vegetation is being used as biomass-fuel for producing electricity. Though emissions are created from equipment and vehicular traffic often associated with utilizing alternative methods, the public still benefits by having the vegetation removed rather than being burned in the Park.

c) Please also consider the number of days suitable for prescribed fire is limited by meteorological conditions and the air shed's capacity to handle smoke impacts, therefore, the number of opportunities for prescribed fire in a given time period or season tend to be fairly small.

2) The California Air Resources Board (ARB) Smoke Management Guidelines for Agricultural and Prescribed Burning (Title 17, Subchapter 2, of the California Code of Regulations) requires the District to develop a Smoke Management Program (SMP) to minimize the production of smoke from all open burning, including prescribed and hazard reduction burning. The Guidelines include a number of required elements such as the District's burn authorization system, regulations to minimize smoke from burning, procedures for conducting various burn activities, meteorological and monitoring data criteria, and several other factors. The District adopted District Rule 4106 (Prescribed Burning and Hazard Reduction Burning) as part of the District's SMP. If the use of fire, whether a natural ignition or prescribed burn, is to be used in the implementation of the Plan, the burn shall be conducted in accordance with the requirements of Title 17, Subchapter 2 and District Rule 4106.

The Smoke Management Guidelines can be found on the ARB website at:
<http://www.arb.ca.gov/smp/regs/regs.htm>

For more information on the District's SMP, please visit the District's website at:
http://www.valleyair.org/BurnPrograms/Burn_Programs.htm

A copy of District Rule 4106 can be found on the District's website at:
<http://www.valleyair.org/rules/currentrules/r4106.pdf>.

The District thanks you for the opportunity to provide comments on the Plan and looks forward with working with the NPS to ensure that the Plan does not severely impact the air quality in and around the Park. District staff is available to meet with you or your staff to further discuss the regulatory requirements that are associated with this project. If you have any questions or require further information, please call Jessica Willis at (559) 230-5818 and provide the reference number at the top of this letter.

Sincerely,

David Warner
Director of Permits Services

Arnaud Marjollet
Permit Services Manager

DW:jw

cc: Errol Villegas, Manager, Strategies and Incentives
Steve Shaw, Supervising Air Quality Specialist, Strategies and Incentives
Daniel Martinez, Supervising Inspector, Compliance

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Correspondence Text

I am disappointed to have read your plan Scenic Management Plan. The plan was extremely amount of clearing of Yosemite's beautiful vistas. The clearing the areas will take away from the views. I visited the park and saw saw the Tunnel view. I was so disappointed to see the removal of the trees. Please don't do this to the 181 vistas listed to be cleared. I enjoy seeing the park as it is now. I have imaged what the vistas would look like without the trees, it appalled me very much. Vistas will not be beautiful postcard views! Please do not go on with this plan. I am voting for the No Action Alternative. Don't disappoint your year after year visitors.

A very appalled visitor.

PEPC Project ID: 23811, DocumentID: 35583
Correspondence: 32

Author Information

Keep Private: No

Name: [REDACTED]

Organization:

Organization Type: I - Unaffiliated Individual

Address: [REDACTED]

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Correspondence Information

Status: New

Park Correspondence Log:

Date Sent: 09/17/2010

Date Received: 09/17/2010

Number of Signatures: 1

Form Letter: No

Contains Request(s): No

Type: Web Form

Notes:

Correspondence Text

To Superintendent,

I attended the public meeting for the Scenic Management Plan. I was very angry to hear the NPS is planning to clear cut the trees from the vistas. I tried to understand the rangers point of view, however, the planning just doesn't make sense. Why is NPS taking the time to cut 80 -130 year trees from the vistas? I like having the trees in my pictures! The vistas need to have the trees because that's what make it a National Park.

I enjoy being among the trees while visiting the park. I have visited the park since I was a young boy. Seeing the beautiful

views is the best part in being in the park. I do not want NPS to remove trees or anything. Yosemite is beautiful the way it is.

I don't want to go in the park and see the burning and cutting! The cutting of 30 vistas just isn't right. This is also an expensive plan! Stop this plan!

September 16, 2010

Via Electronic Mail and Fax

Don Neubacher, Superintendent
Yosemite National Park
ATTN: Scenic Vista Management Plan Environmental Assessment
P.O. Box 577
Yosemite, CA 95389

RE: Public Comment—Scenic Vista Management Plan Environmental Assessment (EA)

Superintendent Neubacher:

Following are comments concerning the Scenic Vista Management Plan EA.

Living in the lower elevations of the Sierras, we are thoroughly familiar with and fully support vegetation management techniques (e.g., clearing understory, trimming, thinning, etc.) as critical to facilitating the management of wildfires, restoring watersheds, and enhancing the overall health of the ecosystem. We recognize Park management's interest in doing the same. However, we believe that *this* Scenic Vista Management Plan (SVMP) is a step too far.

In essence, planners are asking the public to sign off on a blank check, without knowing any details or specifics, thereby giving the Park free license to clear and/or cut down "large volumes of trees" in the name of managing scenic vistas. As the Plan explains, even the EA's list of vistas can change—though the number will remain the same—if "new" vistas are determined to be of a higher priority than existing managed points.

And though the Plan mentions that final annual work plans will be released to the public for viewing before work commences (i.e., posted on Park website, E-newsletter), there appears to be no process whereby the public will be encouraged to comment on (or protest) a proposed work plan which might result in the work plan undergoing further review or modification. The only consultation will be between Native American tribes and "groups associated with the park"—whoever those groups might be...

We cannot support such a loosely framed list of changeable possibilities that depend on yet-to-be-completed Merced and Tuolumne River Comprehensive Management Plans for overall guidance, tier from a 1980 General that will be amended by said River Plans when completed, and designed to be managed devoid of any public process.

SPECIFIC COMMENTS

1) The SVMP "...will derive its overall guidance from both the Merced [MRP] and Tuolumne River Plans [TRP], once they are completed." "Actions for vista management will be done in accordance with these plans."

If the premise of the SVMP is to derive its overall guidance from nonexistent plans (i.e., MRP, TRP), then it would seem the entire premise is flawed. The Plan acknowledges that 65% of identified vistas fall within the Lower Montane Forest and that at this elevation “removal of larger volumes of trees could take place...” The Lower Montane Forest largely represents the Yosemite Valley and the El Portal portions of the Merced River Corridor. If approved, the SVMP will implement the preferred alternative in fall of 2010; yet the MRP, which will outline the “overall goals for protecting and enhancing scenic values,” determine land uses, restoration, and levels of facilities, and provide overall guidance to the SVMP, isn’t scheduled for completion until at least 2013—three years later. This makes no sense. All work in the Merced River Corridor needs to be placed on hold until there is a legally valid comprehensive management plan in place for the Merced River.

The SVMP states that “vista clearing will be done in accordance to WSRA.” Yet WSRA requires a comprehensive management plan in place within three years from the time a river is designated “wild and scenic.” The Tuolumne River was designated in 1984 and the Merced River was designated in 1987, yet there is no comprehensive management plan in place for either River more than 20 years later. It would seem any vista clearing done in advance of completion of these management plans would be in clear violation of WSRA.

With respect to the yet-to-be-completed MRP, the SVMP states that “actions proposed will be analyzed with regard to their... impacts on draft ORVs” which apparently will be based on “early versions of draft ORV reports...” “A final ORV report...will incorporate comments received during public scoping and review of the DEIS, and will become the foundation of the final EIS for the...Merced wild and scenic river corridor.”

- Public scoping for the yet-to-be-completed MRP is currently undergoing crisis intervention. Scoping was conducted in 2000, 2004, 2007, and 2009/10; scoping reports were issued in 2000 and 2004 and draft scoping reports were issued in 2007 and 2010. The scoping report for 2010 was supposed to incorporate all previous versions and comments as well as a yet-to-be-disclosed methodology for analyzing comments made pre/post Settlement Agreement, yet this draft report has been aborted, a new contractor hired within the last couple of weeks, all comments to be re-analyzed, and the MRP planning team continuing efforts to establish direction. Scoping and release of the final Scoping Report are central to what will be the scope and content of the environmental information and analysis, a suitable range of alternatives, and the nature and extent of potential environmental impacts that are to be included in the Draft EIS. Yet the SVMP wants to move forward with “implementation” this Fall absent this information. That is unacceptable.
- As per the Settlement Agreement: “The Settling Parties agree that the NPS will develop *new* elements for...WSRA requirements that will be incorporated into the new [MRP]...”—specifically mentioned are “Outstandingly Remarkable Values.” The draft ORV Report for the new MRP was issued in June, closing public comment on July 31. Subsequently, Planners have recognized the need to revisit some of their decisions and have indicated they will be developing a matrix whereby the public will be able to review submitted comments and learn the rationale why some comments will be incorporated and others not. In other words, the draft ORV Report that currently exists for the new MRP—though admittedly an exercise in testing

the waters—is certainly not ready to serve as a stand-alone document to be used in analyzing proposed SVMP actions. “Scenic” is a proposed ORV, one of five central to protection of the Merced River; it has not been finalized and as the SVMP states “will not be resolved until the Record of Decision (ROD) is signed.” How can the Scenic ORV be protected absent a finalized definition, condition assessment report, and measurable goals and objectives?

Both of these fundamental elements of the MRP planning process appear to be in disarray and are far from being ready to serve as reliable documents upon which SVMP actions can be analyzed.

The SVMP further states that “the current management strategy works well until comprehensive management plans for the Tuolumne and Merced wild and scenic rivers are completed that could make provisions for change necessary to further protect and enhance ORVs.” Interestingly, the Scenic Vista “Fact Sheet” states: “There is currently no consistent process to prioritize vistas for management, and the lack of a comprehensive effort has allowed many vistas to remain obscured. Past vista management has reestablished scenic vistas at a rate of about three vistas per decade. So it is unclear what exactly is “working well.” And if reestablishing “scenic vistas at a rate of three vistas per decade,” is an example of what is working well, then putting all SVMP actions in the Merced River Corridor on hold pending completion (ROD) of a long overdue legally valid comprehensive management plan for the Merced River as required by WSRA would appear to be no problem. We remain concerned that whatever “current management strateg[ies]” appear to be working well, they will continue to result in a piecemeal planning effort as opposed to an holistic effort to ensure overall protection of the Merced River and Yosemite National Park.

2) The SVMP “tiers off the 1980 GMP.”

We recognize that the 1980 GMP is currently a legally valid management plan, but we also recognize that the long overdue MRP (and TRP) will amend the GMP, most likely resulting in an upward trend of protecting and enhancing ecosystems. Therefore, analyzing SVMP actions based on the existing GMP is inadequate—especially when 65% of the work and large volumes of trees are being considered for removal along the Yosemite Valley and El Portal segments of the Merced River.

GENERAL COMMENTS

1) The Park needs to develop a local alternative to PEPC for electronically communicating comments to planners. Whatever server is used for PEPC as it relates to the park planning function is nearly impossible to access. There has never been a problem with the Park’s locally operated sites. It is very disappointing that comments will no longer be accepted via yose_planning@nps.gov.

2) Decentralization of the planning process remains a concern. Though we understand that a Park Leadership Team meets regularly to provide a measure of planning oversight, the rapid-fire proliferation of plans released by various divisions—most of them follow-on plans that appear to be tiering from yet-to-be completed management plans (e.g., MRP, TRP, outdated Wilderness Management Plan, etc.)—is troubling. Not only is it challenging for an interested public

Public Comment: Scenic Vista Management Plan EA

Page 4 of 4

September 16, 2010

trying to keep up with the multitude of comment requests, but there seems to be no logical progression or flow. Cumulative impacts need to be evaluated as part of an holistic process, not piecemeal. One is reminded of the 1997 VIP which separated out the Lodge Plan, the Employee Housing Plan and the Falls Corridor Plan until the Courts ruled in favor of development of a Comprehensive Yosemite Valley Plan where all projects were considered together to ensure a thorough evaluation of cumulative impacts...

3) We continue to be concerned with the lack of interaction, on-going communication, and dialogue between Resource Management staff and the general public. We believe that exposure to the research activities and expertise of RMS staff would be of tremendous benefit to the public in enhancing their knowledge and understanding of the Park's natural resource function while also fostering good will. Whether it be through monthly e-newsletters, e-updates, interactive message forums, or some other vehicle, establishing a dialogue with the public in "layman's-speak" would be invaluable in gaining support for RMS objectives.

Sincerely,

/s/

Greg Adair, Friends of Yosemite Valley (FoYV)

John Brady, Mariposans for the Environment and Responsible Government (MERG)

Cc: Kevin McCardle; Project Manager, Scenic Vista Management Plan, Yosemite National Park
Joy Fischer; Project Manager, Scenic Vista Management Plan, Yosemite National Park
Kathleen Morse; Chief of Planning, Yosemite National Park
Sharon Duggan; Attorney FoYV/MERG
Julia Olson; Attorney FoYV/MERG
Jeanne Aceto

Public comment
Scenic Vista Management Plan EA
Superintendent, Yosemite National Park
P.O. Box 577
Yosemite, CA 95389

RECEIVED
SVM-S-029
SEP 16 2010
Pg 1 of 1
YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

16 Sept 10

Dear Superintendent Neubacher:

The following comments on your Scenic Vista Management Plan EA for Yosemite are submitted on behalf of the Sierra Club Yosemite Committee. We hope they will be helpful in your efforts to restore and maintain the many iconic and historic vistas that have been lost or reduced due to changes in human activity, and the interruption of natural processes that have occurred in recent decades. Delaying action on a systematic vista clearance plan will only exacerbate and complicate future restoration efforts when removing large maturing trees blocking view sheds will become an increasingly problematic issue.

The Sierra Club Yosemite Committee supports a systematic plan to document, reestablish, and protect Yosemite's iconic and historic view sheds as prescribed in the plan's preferred alternative three. Safeguards described in this alternative include protecting mature old growth trees, trees that afford stand alone scenic value, restrictions on clearing high value trees including Whitebark pine, Sugar pine, and California black oak, and limiting vista management to roadside and Valley sites in non wilderness areas. These are important elements of the plan. The most important provision in the document prioritizes ecological conditions and resource impacts to determine limits and intensity of vista clearing. Setting limits and restricting cutting in habitats of high biological value are important actions to consider insuring protection of high value resources when conflicts with vista clearance objectives occur.

Actions proposed in Plan's preferred alternative three are essential to restore and preserve Yosemite's view sheds from becoming increasingly compromised and obscured by many fast growing Yosemite woodland species. Prioritizing ecological conditions as a basis to determine the extent and impacts of vista clearing will insure protection of high value biological resources and provide future generations the opportunity to enjoy the iconic and historic view sheds of Yosemite National Park.

Thanks for listening

Alan Carlton, Chair
Sierra Club Yosemite Committee

PEPC Project ID: 23811, DocumentID: 35583
Correspondence: 28

Author Information

Keep Private: Yes

Name: [REDACTED]

Organization:

Organization Type: I - Unaffiliated Individual

Address: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Correspondence Information

Status: New

Park Correspondence Log:

Date Sent: 09/16/2010

Date Received: 09/16/2010

Number of Signatures: 1

Form Letter: No

Contains Request(s): No

Type: Web Form

Notes:

Correspondence Text

I have visited Yosemite with my family for over 40 years. The trees and shrubs have never bothered me. However all the buildings that have gone up over the years are obstructing some views more than the trees. Keep the wonderful trees and spend the money more wisely! [REDACTED]



09/15/2010 10:48 PM

To Yose_planning@nps.gov

cc

bcc

Subject Check out "Yosemite National Park - Scenic Vistas in
Yosem..."

RECEIVED

SVM-S-027

SEP 16 2010

1 of 1

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

Click Here: Yosemite
National Park - Scenic Vistas in Yosem...

Superintendent,

I am a visitor to the park since I was a child. I have seen all the changes from very good to very bad. I read the scenic management plan. I was appalled to know NPS wants to clear cut so many vistas (30) at one time. I do not like this plan to clear cut to open the views. I understand that you want the park to be impressive, however Yosemite is already very impressive! Why would you want to clear trees from vistas? The trees are part of the beautiful views. The state also has a deficit. I understand it's going to cost billions over the next several years. This is plan is insane! I hope you consider the No Action Alternative. </HTML>

PEPC Project ID: 23811, DocumentID: 35583
Correspondence: 26

Author Information

Keep Private: No
Name: [REDACTED]
Organization: sierra club yosemite committee
Organization Type: I - Unaffiliated Individual
Address: [REDACTED]
E-mail:

Correspondence Information

Status: New Park Correspondence Log:
Date Sent: 09/16/2010 Date Received: 09/16/2010
Number of Signatures: 1 Form Letter: No
Contains Request(s): No Type: Web Form
Notes:

Correspondence Text

Public comment
Scenic Vista Management Plan EA
Superintendent, Yosemite National Park
P.O. Box 577
Yosemite, CA 95389 16 Sept 10

Dear Superintendent Neubacher:

The following comments on your Scenic Vista Management Plan EA for Yosemite are submitted on behalf of the Sierra Club Yosemite Committee.

We hope they will be helpful in your efforts to restore and maintain the many iconic and historic vistas that have been lost or reduced do to changes in human activity, and the interruption of natural processes that have occurred in recent decades. Delaying action on a systematic vista clearance plan will only exacerbate and complicate future restoration efforts when removing large maturing trees blocking view sheds will become an increasingly problematic issue.



andre taylor

09/08/2010 08:14 PM

To <yose_planning@nps.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject

SVN-025

Dear, Superintendent of Yosemite, I think cutting down tons and tons of trees in Yosemite is not the answer to the problem! I think its fine to cut down a few trees, but you guys have taken it too far! Why can't you guys just cut the branch in the way?! I think not cutting a branch in the way because it doesn't look natural is ridiculous!!!!!! You guys weren't telling the truth too, my former teacher asked a ranger how many trees you guys cut down, the ranger said only 3, but my former teacher kicked over the rocks that cover the stumps and she counted 40. if you guys are doing this for \$\$\$\$\$\$ from the lumber company, I really think that is ridiculous. You guys say your gonna wait till the animals that need the trees to live to have babies then you will cut down the trees, but what about next year, and all the years after that? The animals may become endangered or maybe even extinct. Thankyou very much. from Jake T. P.S please don't replace the ground with cement.

RECEIVED

SVN-S-025

SEP 16 2010

Pg 1 of 1

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

Rec'd
9/7/10
5c

Yosemite National Park

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the InteriorNATIONAL
PARK
SERVICEProject Name: Scenic Vista Management Plan
(Please use a separate form for each Project you are commenting on)

9/6/10

Your Name: [REDACTED]RECEIVED
SVM-S-024

SEP 07 2010

pg 1 a b 1

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

Attention: Superintendent,

COMMENTS

I was in the park this spring and summer.
I was shocked to see the Tunnel View without
trees! I went to your website to find that you have
a Scenic Vista plan. After reviewing the plan,
again I was shocked to read you are clearing
181 vistas! I do not want to see Yosemite Park
without the trees. I go to the park to get away
from the "concrete jungle" the city. The trees are
part of the beautiful vistas. Let nature
take care of it! I don't want to see the ^{mk} looking
like a "city park."

Please reconsider your plans, I also don't
like all the burning that's been done. I don't want
to visit the park and experience seeing trees being
cut and areas being burned too!

Yosemite National Park

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

NATIONAL
PARK
SERVICE

Project Name: Scenic Vista Management Plan

(Please use a separate form for each Project you are commenting on)

Rec'd
9/7/10
-64

Your Name: 

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SVA-S-23
SEP 07 2010
pg 1 of 1

COMMENTS

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

To: Superintendent,

I have been visiting Yosemite for 40 years.

I have read about this plan. I am not happy about it. I don't like the Tunnel View vista clearing of the trees!

If all the vistas (180) are going to look like this... This will be an ~~on~~ environmental disaster! I don't want to go into the park not seeing trees in my favorite vistas, especially when I take pictures. The trees are part of the vistas. I like framing my pictures with trees!

Please don't do any more destruction!
Stop the plan!

Yosemite National Park

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



RECEIVED 9/7/10

Project Name:

Scenic Vista Management Plan

(Please use a separate form for each Project you are commenting on)

RECEIVED

SVAS-022

SEP 07 2010

Your Name:

[Redacted Name]

PG 1 of 1
YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

COMMENTS

I am supportive of this Management Plan. I do think NPS needs to reconsider the baseline selected and perhaps push it back further to provide opportunities to Open Areas even more than currently proposed.

I also feel this plan should be incorporated into a more expansive "Forest Management Plan". Had forests been managed in a more "natural" fashion in the past, this Management Plan may not have been needed.

The environmental process is designed to look at the cumulative impacts of all proposed activities in a given area. To do this plan piecemeal does not address the cumulative impacts of all projects proposed by NPS.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment.

[Redacted Signature]

PEPC Project ID: 23811, DocumentID: 35583
Correspondence: 21

Author Information

Keep Private: No

Name: [REDACTED]

Organization: National Park Hospitality Association

Organization Type: I - Unaffiliated Individual

Address: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Correspondence Information

Status: New

Park Correspondence Log:

Date Sent: 09/16/2010

Date Received: 09/16/2010

Number of Signatures: 1

Form Letter: No

Contains Request(s): No

Type: Web Form

Notes:

Correspondence Text

We support the proposal to enhance the opportunities for visitors to enjoy scenic vistas in Yosemite National Park, including appropriate management of trees and other vegetation and provision of appropriate parking and viewing stations.

SVPM-026

Rec'd
9/7/10 SC

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

August 31, 2010

RECEIVED
SVPM-#020
SEP 07 2010

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

Mr. Kevin McCardle
Project Manager – Scenic
Vista Management Plan
Yosemite National Park
P. O. Box 700
El Portal, CA 95318

Re: Scenic Vista Management Plan
Further consideration of Hetch Hetchy area

Dear Mr. McCardle:

This letter follows up on our telephone conversation earlier today. With thanks to Sue Clark, I received a copy of the Environmental Assessment for the pending plan last week. Looking through it, it appears that only a few sites in the Hetch Hetchy area have been assessed and that none is on the valley's South Wall.

Enclosed please find a photocopy of my 6-page letter of March 10, 2009 to then Superintendent David Uberuaga. Attached to this letter are photocopies of seven photos which accompanied that letter. The camera site for photos nos. 5 and 6 is near the quarry's east wall. Since the wilderness boundary probably closely skirts the quarry's upper edge, the site probably is within the excluded wilderness area.

Both my cousin [REDACTED] and I, as stated in the enclosed letter, are prepared to lead any interested NPS personnel on a scramble to the camera site. Everyone who has thus far scrambled to the site, including of course, Roger and myself, believe it is a view which every able-bodied park visitor is entitled to experience.

Thank you for personally discussing this matter with me.

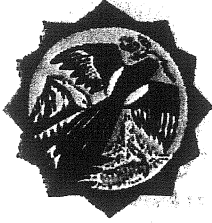
Very truly yours,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

WSF:lom

Enc: As stated

cc: Roger E. Leonard



Yosemite-Mono Lake Paiute Indian Community

Po Box 163523, Sacramento, Ca 95816

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SVM-5-019

SEP 01 2010

Page 1 of 2
YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

9-1-10

Dear Superintendent

RE: Scenic Vista Management Plan Environmental Assessment Review

In your presentation for the Scenic Vista Management Plan Environmental Assessment Review it states "This occurred for a number of reasons including the exclusion of traditional American Indian-managed fires, suppression of lightning-ignited fire, and human-constructed changes to hydrologic flows."

Why does Yosemite National Park work with the Southern Sierra Miwuks also called The American Indian Council of Mariposa and allow them to be the lead in any Native American cultural programs and presentations in Yosemite National Park? The Southern Sierra Miwuks were not the indigenous Indians of Yosemite. The Miwoks were late comers into Yosemite Valley and enemies of the Yosemite Ahwahneechees who were Paiutes.

The Southern Sierra Miwuks were the scouts for James Savage and the Mariposa Battalion, and that is documented in many historical accounts including Dr. Lafayette H. Bunnell's book The Discovery of Yosemite that is sold in the Yosemite National Park bookstore. Chief Bautista and Cowchitty are documented in the book as enemies of Chief Tenaya and his band of Ahwahneechees of Yosemite Valley. They, and Cypriano, were afraid to enter Yosemite Valley and only entered the valley as scouts of the white militia. So why is Yosemite National Park claiming the Miwoks are the original Indians of Yosemite today when they were not? Yet the enemy chief's descendents of the Ahwahneechees are now claiming to be the original Ahwahneechees

It was the Paiute Yosemite Valley Indians, the Ahwahneechees, led by Chief Tenaya that did the "Indian" burns to manage the Yosemite Valley floor not the Miwoks. The original name of the burn was called "the Piute Burn" and that is documented by the National Department of Forestry in the 1940s. One of the main reasons the Ahwahneechee Paiutes burned the brush back was to have a clear view of approaching enemies and that was the Southern Sierra Miwuks.

The Yosemite National Park service should correct the misinformation that they are falsely promoting to the general public.

Here is the truth. The Miwoks were not indigenous to Yosemite. The Miwoks were not the ones who did the burning in Yosemite Valley. The Miwoks were the enemies of the Ahwahneechees. The Miwoks were the scouts for the Mariposa Battalion. The Ahwahneechees were Paiutes. It is that simple.

Yosemite National Park can easily fix the lies and misinformation by going back and READING early books about the Indians of Yosemite and by looking at the Indian family histories on 1929 California Indian rolls the Yosemite National Park has in their possession. The rolls used to be located on top of Craig D. Bates' desk.

Remember, there are no Yosemite Miwoks, only Yosemite-Mono Lake Paiutes

Yours truly,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Community

Sacramento, CA 95816
916-930-0761

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SV P-S-019
SEP 01 2010
Pg 2 of 2
YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK



Paiute Children along the Merced River, Yosemite, California, circa 1900

SVH-5-018

SVH-018



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National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
Yosemite National Park
Office of the Superintendent
SEP 15 2010
Visitor Comment Form

Yosemite National Park
P.O. Box 577
Yosemite CA 95389

Date: September 1, 2010
Yosemite National Park

meadows & trees first!
not visitors

Visitor Name: [redacted]

Mailing Address: [redacted]

[redacted] ☐ Action ☒ FYI PM

Phone Number: [redacted]

Assigned: [redacted]
Date: 10/16/10

Park Address / Until date: none

Specific services, facility, or incident involved: Tree Removals for Scenic Views

Names of other persons affected, if known: Meadow "restoration" is

Comments (for additional space, use the back of this sheet): critical, however I
have concerns about the ability, commitment,
the chronic statements about shortage of funds and
manpower in accomplishing meadow "restoration."

"Simply" removing trees to expand Cooks meadow
involves tremendous future years in maintaining
a meadow. I don't think Yosemite staff can
do it. If the meadows could be "restored" to its
"former glory" & huge benefits to plants & wildlife -

then remove only the trees needed to do so, But I have
no faith that quick fixes & excuses will not interfere.

Visitor Signature: Dana Gargner

Written Response Requested? (If yes, please check) ☒

Form Received by: [signature] Jeffrey Truxo

Note to employee receiving form: Please route completed form to the Superintendent's office immediately. This will facilitate action and may preclude additional complaints. If complaint was satisfactorily adjusted through personal contact or discussion, please describe settlement on the back of this form and initial.

Already entered into file but he needs response too!

Night page

of course killing invasive plants is an issue. I fiercely oppose the use of herbicides & pesticides. Nobody needs ~~more~~ more proof of ~~the~~ ^{the} their devastating effects!

I am aware that NPS works with BIO-Integral
Resource Center located in Berkeley, California. ^{carefully, I hope,}
CHAS in N. Calif. is a good group. Same goes
for Velvet Cross Removal. I strongly believe when
one commits themselves that pesticides are not
an option - not even as a last resort - you'll
find the solutions.

find the solutions, one cannot compare scenic views of former years with today. Because today the U.S. & world's forests have been greatly depleted. today's new plants will never have the advantages of a less polluted world, we need more not less trees, more views - & it already has magnificent views - & to get a

Yosemite already has magnificent
also of Yosemite Falls. To remove a tree to get a
better view from this & that standpoint is
irresponsible. You'd be displacing; all that depends
on that one tree. Staff already is aware of the
numerous benefits of a tree. I don't need to go into
that, why is that blackberry bush still remaining near
Lower Pine Campground. Saw it on Andy Stale's bear walk
in August 2009. Why (if it hasn't already) not go get rid
of that first! The non meadow trees of today in Yosemite
have a keener role in our environment. Leave them
alone!

PEPC Project ID: 23811, DocumentID: 35583
Correspondence: 16

Author Information

Keep Private: No
Name: [REDACTED]
Organization:
Organization Type: I - Unaffiliated Individual
Address: [REDACTED]
E-mail:

Correspondence Information

Status: New Park Correspondence Log:
Date Sent: 09/14/2010 Date Received: 09/14/2010
Number of Signatures: 1 Form Letter: No
Contains Request(s): No Type: Web Form
Notes:

Correspondence Text

Yosemite Superintendent,

Upon reading this plan, I do not agree with the clearing of the vistas. The plan is to expensive for our times in a deficit.

It doesn't make sense to clear cut the areas of trees because there historic views. The park needs to improve in other areas.

I like the park the way it is now, I enjoy visiting the park and being in a forest atmosphere. This is why most people

enjoy being in the park to get away from the "big city life. Clearing cutting 30 vistas in one year is just too much!

I prefer that you just leave it the way it is now, Your NO ACTION plan is the best plan to consider due to our state deficit.

PEPC Project ID: 23811, DocumentID: 35583

Correspondence: 15

Author Information

Keep Private: Yes
Name: [REDACTED]
Organization:
Organization Type: I - Unaffiliated Individual
Address:

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Correspondence Information

Status: New Park Correspondence Log:
Date Sent: 09/13/2010 Date Received: 09/13/2010
Number of Signatures: 1 Form Letter: No
Contains Request(s): No Type: Web Form
Notes:

Correspondence Text

To: Superintendent,

I am a 45 year visitor to Yosemite Park. I visit the park 5 - 8 times a year. I attended the open house meeting a few weeks ago. I spoke to the Rangers about the plan. I have also read the plan. I am very appalled to know that vistas will be cleared of trees in the park.

The trees are part of the view in the park. When I photograph the view, I want trees in my picture! I live in the city. I visit the park to get away from the concrete roads and tall buildings. I want to be in the forest with tall trees and beautiful views. I was very sad to see the Wawona Tunnel View with no trees! All I could think of was 'What happened to all the trees!'

I certainly do not want to see the entire park in this manner. I do not want to visit the park and see trees being cut down and views destroyed especially 30 vistas in one year! This plan is too costly, billions. It does not seem logical to spend so much money on vistas instead of park needs; trails at Happy Isles, showers at Housekeeping, parking lots, planting oak trees etc. We are in a deficit. I don't want to see projects started, then NPS runs out of money in the middle of the plan.

The park needs trees to keep out the smog and prescribed burns smoke. It gets better bad in the valley during these burns and especially when they get out of control like they always do. This also needs to stop until NPS knows how to control them.

PEPC Project ID: 23811, DocumentID: 35583
Correspondence: 14

Author Information

Keep Private: Yes
Name: N/A N/A
Organization:
Organization Type: I - Unaffiliated Individual
Address:

E-mail:

Correspondence Information

Status: New Park Correspondence Log:
Date Sent: 09/07/2010 Date Received: 09/07/2010
Number of Signatures: 1 Form Letter: No
Contains Request(s): No Type: Web Form
Notes:

Correspondence Text

I was impressed by the Scenic Vista Management Plan and the various alternatives offered in this plan. I had never thought of trying to "quantify" scenic vistas, but it makes sense when you think about it.

I am strongly in favor of "opening up" the views at Yosemite. It is clear from looking at historical photos that previously open views are now "closed" or partially closed. Besides the scenic qualities being lost due to obstruction by tree and brush growth, there are other ecological impacts from the suppression of fire the past 100+ years.

So I encourage the Park Service to continue with this plan, and to use your best judgment about which option to select. I would probably be more aggressive than the preferred alternatives indicate, but any move in this direction will be an improvement and I recognize there are many factors to be considered in the decision about the level of work to be done in this plan.

Thank you. One other note, I found it difficult to find this comment form on the main Yosemite NPS web site. If I hadn't read about it in the newspaper, I never would have spent the time searching for it within your site.



Central Sierra Environmental Resource Center
Box 396 • Twain Harte, CA 95383 • (209) 586-7440 • FAX (209) 586-4986
Visit our website at: www.cserc.org or contact us at: johub@cserc.org

September 3, 2010

Superintendent, Yosemite National Park
Attention: Scenic Vista Management Plan
P.O. Box 577
Yosemite, CA 95389

RECEIVED
SV P - S - ~~013~~ 013
SEP 15 2010
pg 1 of 4
YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

Re: Scenic Vista Management Plan for Yosemite National Park

To Kevin and others on the I.D. Team:

Our CSERC staff appreciated the recent Open House discussions and field tour provided by Park planners to discuss the Scenic Vista Management Plan for Yosemite National Park. Based on our initial review of the EA and the range of alternatives provided, we are providing these comments for your consideration. Obviously, a common goal of CSERC staff and the Park is to ensure that Park staff balances the need to enhance and maintain scenic vistas, while preserving the ecological values of the vegetation at or surrounding these sites.

Attempts to rate and determine what is valuable to the Park visitor is a not an exact science and can be quite arbitrary or judgmental. CSERC urges Park staff to consider the value that individual trees may provide to the visitor at each site -- including provision of shade, screening of roads and buildings, and the perception of privacy in a natural setting. In a park that gets over 4 million visitors per year, these considerations may be just as valuable as opening up a viewing area. It is also important that balance is achieved to enhance and direct visitor use to established viewing areas, while keeping in mind the values that are preserved by retaining some of the vegetation that post date the establishment of the particular vista point.

Our comments below provide more detail in regards to this programmatic approach to vista management in the Park:

Selection of alternatives

CSERC is generally supportive of the preferred Alternative 3, which limits the number of vistas considered for initial clearing to 93. That alternative also uses ecological values to determine the particular treatment and intensity of vista clearing at each site.

There does appear, however, to be conflicts in the document regarding the intention of the preferred management alternative and the standardized prescriptions proposed. On Page II-13, the plan states that crews would use "a standardized clearing prescription to give initial clearing treatments to vistas with medium and high values." This appears to conflict with the intention of the preferred alternative to treat vegetation according to the ecological values "based on the vegetation communities particular at each vista site" as stated previously in the same section. It is important that those who are tasked with implementation of this plan follow the intent of the preferred alternative (if this is selected as the final

approach). It should be emphasized that these standardized prescriptions described in Table II-2 describe *maximum* widths for viewing areas and feathering. For example, the 30-meter viewing area for a static vista site may be reduced if ecological conditions at the site are such that more vegetation should be retained. At many, if not most sites, treating a 30-meter wide viewing area with adjacent 30-meter feathering areas on either side may not be either necessary or beneficial for a visitor experience. Accordingly, CSERC urges that in the final decision for this plan, that there be clarity that the 30-meter wide core viewing area is a general maximum limit that would be applied as a standard approach to each vista; however, the Park staff should be tasked with the responsibility to determine where a narrower treatment swath or even where a slightly wider treatment swath is most appropriate at a specific vista site location.

On page III-48, it states that under the preferred alternative, "most habitat components with particularly high value would remain, unless removing them were deemed critical to establishment of the vista". This statement is a bit confusing, because the intention of the plan was to protect *existing* vistas and not "establish" new ones. We urge Park management to provide emphasis to all staff involved with the scenic vista treatments and site specific design of individual treatments to make it a priority to retain all high value habitat components of a vista site.

Vegetation management based on date of establishment

CSERC urges Park staff to not be overly rigid in the approach of managing vegetation based on the date that a scenic vista was established. While we respect the desire of planning staff to base scenic vista management on some standardized approach, let's be honest. Does it really matter for current benefits to visitors to the Park whether or not a vista was established in 1885 or 1937? Does it really matter for current/future Park visitors whether a scenic vista is now managed to replicate the conditions of the exact date when it was originally serving as a vista point? The answer to these questions is certainly "no."

What is important is NOT the date when a vista site was first being utilized officially by Park management, but instead, what is important is whether that vista point today has beneficial value for visitors to the Park and will enrich their Park experience. In some cases, large trees that provide shade or do have significant ecological value may post date the official establishment of a vista. Yet at that site, it may be that foregoing the opportunity (to resurrect the conditions from whenever the vista site was established) actually enhances scenic values for the Park visitor today because what presently covers the site is highly scenic and worth keeping.

The important scenic vista management objective that Park staff shared with us was the desire to ensure that the icon or feature (s) that are to be viewed are visible. Where a vista is determined by Park staff to be highly desirable, we urge the Park to focus on that objective, rather than trying to recreate what the scene may have looked like exactly as it was before. It is the scenic view today that should matter, not how to replicate or recreate the vista site as it was some time in the distant past.

There is also a second aspect of vista management that also ties to this matter. On our field tour, Kevin and our group stood in a spot to use it as an example of a place where the original vista point would have provided an unimpeded view of Half Dome. Today conifers over near the Ahwahnee now block a portion of the view.

One of the members of the public who was participating in the field tour emotionally pointed out that if someone wanted to see Half Dome from that area, all they had to do was to walk across the street. This is the key point that CSERC wishes to emphasize as a second aspect of Park staff planning a treatment at a vista site. As noted above, the goal should not be so much what it looked like when it was first a vista site. The goal should be to provide a great vista view for current Park visitors if it is an appropriate and important

SVP-S-017

site for such a vista. And tied to that, if today's visitor to the Park can simply walk across the road or drive another 200 yards to another location to get the desired view, then it should not be a priority for Park staff to treat this specific vista site where the view may be blocked or diminished. Let the Park visitor walk or drive a short distance to an already existing vista point with an existing view.

Retention of large, decadent trees

CSERC strongly recommends that old growth trees be retained at scenic vista points. Old growth trees (generally those trees with a DBH of at least 30" or greater) should only be removed for scenic vista purposes if the Park provides a strong rationale for removal of that specific large tree, since those large conifers are providing a scenic, as well as biological benefit. As members of the public noted during the Park's tour of vista points, the view of Half Dome or Yosemite Falls is actually enhanced with the presence of surrounding vegetation, particularly large trees. More importantly, such trees provide valuable habitat in an area that has been largely modified to accommodate human visitors. Retention of trees that provide a variety of niches and nesting areas for many wildlife species should be retained to the greatest extent feasible.

Although the plan states that no old growth trees will be removed in the preferred alternative, Table 11-5 shows that in all alternatives, trees over 30 inches DBH would be removed at the example vista site provided. It should be emphasized that such large trees do not necessarily need to be removed unless *critical* to the treatment objectives for that specific vista.

Additionally, our Center urges that mature oaks and other hardwoods be favored for retention when trees are being removed for scenic reasons. Such deciduous trees do not have foliage for half the year, so their blockage of views is already naturally limited, and the fall season leaf colors of oaks, dogwoods, maples, and other colorful deciduous trees often add significantly to the scenic value of the landscape view.

Public Education During Vegetation Management Activities

Many visitors to the Park may become alarmed if they witness trees being cut down at popular viewing areas. CSERC encourages Park staff to make every effort to keep the public informed of management activities that may appear to be destructive and unnecessary. Before and during treatment of a particular vista point begins, informative signage should be placed at the site explaining the purpose of the project. Additionally, once the work plan for each year of treatment is completed, it should be easily accessible on the Park website as well as posted at the Visitor Center.

In closing, our staff notes that the vision and high ideals of those designing a project may not always be effectively communicated to or carried out by the hard-working staff or contract workers who actually do the work. When it comes to sites where over the years, hundreds of thousands or even millions of visitors will stop, look, and savor the beauty of Yosemite, it is important that the Park makes every effort to naturalize the project site, minimize the height of stumps, remove unnatural accumulations of logs/trees that have been cut down, and otherwise manage the project site for its most desirable natural appearance.

CSERC notes that for "ecosystem" benefits in many areas of the Valley Park staff have intentionally left trees that have been killed by prescribed burns or have left large broken oaks or conifers that have been damaged by snow-loads, winds, etc. In truth, most of those trees would not even have been growing in the Valley if it were not for unnatural human intervention that halted natural wildfires and managed the Valley in a fashion that allowed large numbers of trees to take over the landscape. Thus, when many of those trees are killed or broken by either prescribed burning or natural events, the accumulation of that woody material across the roadside areas or within many forest stands is NOT a natural condition that would have been present if natural ecological processes had not been suppressed.

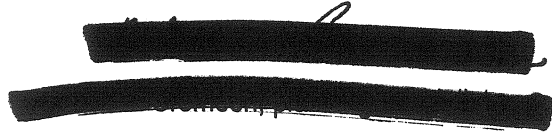
SV P-S-017
Dec 2 2011

CSERC points out this same issue for the scenic vista management planning process. Where trees have unnaturally choked out the view and created dense conditions, it will be poor management and completely unnatural to cut down many trees and then leave them scattered across or clogging the acreage alongside the vista site. In general, if small to medium size trees are being cut at a site, they should be removed so as not create unfavorable fuels for fires and so as to not create unnatural woody material build-up adjacent to the viewing site. Even for the relatively few large trees that are cut down, in many cases it may be most desirable to remove the tree, cut the stump as low as possible, possibly even grind the stump, and leave the site as open as possible, rather than to have fallen logs all across the site. Such decisions are certainly best made on a site by site basis, which is another reason to use criteria as a general rule of thumb, but to allow individual sites to be treated in a fashion that best results in appropriate and natural appearing vegetation at each individual site.

Thank you for considering these comments.



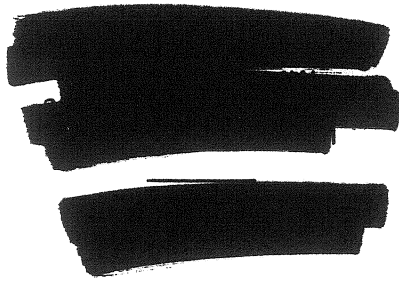
John Buckley, executive director



RECEIVED
SVP-S-017
SEP 15 2010
PS 4 of 4
YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

RECEIVED

SEP 15 2010



SVP - S-012
Rcvd 9/1/10 KD
posted to PER

August 23, 2010

Ms. Susan Clark
National Park Service
P. O. Box 700
El Portal, CA 95318

Re: Scenic Vista Management Plan – Environmental Assessment
SFPUC's Tueeulala/Wapama panorama

Dear Ms. Clark:

I sincerely enjoyed speaking with you earlier today. The Park Service's pending Scenic Vista Management Plan presumably has thus far received little input concerning the Hetch Hetchy Valley. In March of last year I submitted a 6-page letter to then Superintendent David Uberuaga setting forth my views. I enclosed photocopies of a series of current and historic photos which focused on the waterfalls.

I recently stumbled across a superb image of Tueeulala and Wapama printed in the Spring, 2001 Visitors' circular handed out at Yosemite's entrance stations. I am seeking a high resolution print or CD of this photo.

Enclosed please find a color enlargement of the circular's photo. The margin credits the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission. After staff searches of the PUC's archives both in San Francisco and at Moccasin, Ms. Beverly Hennessey, Manager of Regional Government Affairs and External Affairs, advises me that it cannot be located. Ms. Hennessey suggested that I direct my inquiries to the Park Service and, in particular, to Ms. Linda Eade, the park's research librarian. I submitted my written request to Ms. Eade a few weeks ago and am awaiting her response.

I have requested, as you know, a hard copy of the NPS's Environmental Assessment for the pending Scenic Vista Management Plan. I understand that the public comment period ends in mid-September. In considering my own probable submission, I believe it may prove useful to compare my photo captured during a South Wall scramble in 2005 with the photo I am seeking. (You will note that the reverse side of this additional photo contains knowledgeable quotes from some respected eye witnesses.)

Ms. Susan Clark
Re: Scenic Vista Management Plan – Environmental Assessment
SFPUC's Tūeēulala/Wapama panorama
August 23, 2010
Page Two

Thank you for your assistance in obtaining a hard copy of the environmental assessment and for your possible help in Ms. Eade's search for the desired photo.

Very truly yours,

A black rectangular redaction box covers the signature and name of the sender.

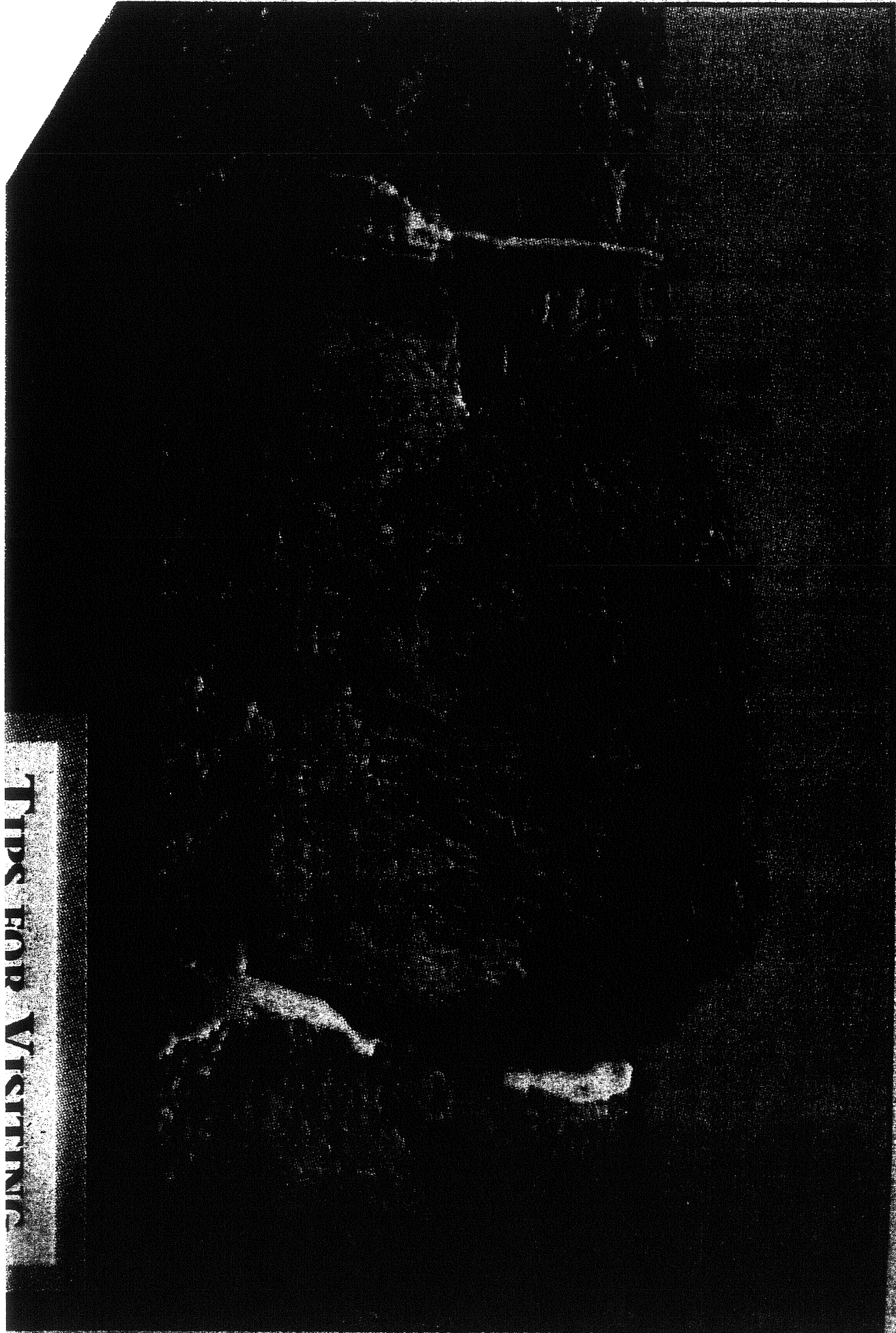
WSF:lom

Enclosures (2)



Spring 2001

Tips for Victims





Our huge snowpack forecasts that this is the year to experience Hetch Hetchy's twin falls spectacular. Here are a few quotes from those who know. From our **Old Gent**, John Muir:

On the opposite side of the Valley, facing Kolana, there is a counterpart of the El Capitan that rises sheer and plain to a height of 1800 feet, and over its massive brow flows a stream which makes the most graceful fall I have ever seen. From the edge of the cliff to the top of an earthquake talus it is perfectly free in the air for a thousand feet before it is broken into cascades among talus boulders. It is in all its glory in June, when the snow is melting fast, but fades and vanishes toward the end of summer.

So fine a fall might well seem sufficient to glorify any valley; but here, as in Yosemite, nature seems in nowise moderate, for a short distance to the eastward of Tueeulala booms and thunders the great Hetch Hetchy Fall, Wapama, so near that you have both of them in full view from the same standpoint. It is the counterpart of the Yosemite fall, but has a much greater volume of water, is about 1700 feet in height, and appears to be nearly vertical, though considerably inclined, and is dashed into huge outbounding bosses of foam on projecting shelves and knobs. **No two falls could be more unlike—Tueeulala out in the open sunshine descending like thistledown; Wapama in a jagged, shadowy gorge roaring and thundering, pounding its way like an earthquake avalanche.** (1912; Emphasis added.)

From a City of San Francisco boat in 2004, California Gold's **Huell Howser** witnessed our twin falls in all their splendor. He uttered a simple, beyond superlative declaration:

As beautiful a sight as I have ever seen.

The next year **Spencer Michels** of public television's "The NewsHour With Jim Lehrer" enjoyed essentially the same reservoir boat ride. The facts which he reported:

Still visible above the surface, Wapama Falls crashes dramatically down from huge granite cliffs, accessible only by hikers willing to walk around the lake.

PEPC Project ID: 23811, DocumentID: 35583
Correspondence: 11

Author Information

Keep Private: No

Name: [REDACTED]

Organization:

Organization Type: I - Unaffiliated Individual

Address: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Correspondence Information

Status: New

Park Correspondence Log:

Date Sent: 08/25/2010

Date Received: 08/25/2010

Number of Signatures: 1

Form Letter: No

Contains Request(s): No

Type: Web Form

Notes:

Correspondence Text

I am sure you think you are protecting Yosemite; however, history has taught us that the good endeavors of man often have been very misguided, even with supposedly strong scientific reasoning. Seems to me cutting down 130 year old trees for the sake of a "view" is truly detrimental to Yosemite. Are you "scientific-types" just going to keep whittling away at nature until it is irreparably ruined for the future generations? Maybe you should ask yourselves what a non-scientific type would do, like Ansel Adams.

PEPC Project ID: 23811, DocumentID: 35583
Correspondence: 10

Author Information

Keep Private: No

Name:

Organization:

Organization Type: I - Unaffiliated Individual

Address:

E-mail:

Correspondence Information

Status: New

Park Correspondence Log:

Date Sent: 08/24/2010

Date Received: 08/24/2010

Number of Signatures: 1

Form Letter: No

Contains Request(s): No

Type: Web Form

Notes:

Correspondence Text

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen:

If you would like for Yosemite to be a natural place for people to visit. Do Nothing, except removing non native plants. Do not "manage the environment". Raze all that has been built by man. Anything less is just another way of hindering Nature. I think that nature did quite fine until man came, including the National Park Service who think they know better than Nature of what should be. The NPS historically has a long record of misguided, inappropriate, and damaging polices. You should guard Yosemite from yourself, damage resulting from Pack Outfits, stop encouraging visitation, and should revoke all concessionaires contracts.

Remember, keep things in perspective when looking into "Yosemites History" and wanting to "restore" things the way they were. Look at a time line, when man came, when things were built etc. When was it the most beautiful?... Take a guess.

Suggestion: Read or re-read John Muirs writings, if you can understand them. You guys are as bad as the lumber men who cut down the Sequoia's for a little profit. Yosemite should not be a resource for careers, a source of profit, or any thing else except LEFT ALONE FOR EVER.

PEPC Project ID: 23811, DocumentID: 35583

Correspondence: 9

Author Information

Keep Private: No
Name: [REDACTED]
Organization: YosemiteValleyCampersCoalition
Organization Type: I - Unaffiliated Individual
Address: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
E-mail: [REDACTED]

Correspondence Information

Status: New Park Correspondence Log:
Date Sent: 08/18/2010 Date Received: 08/18/2010
Number of Signatures: 1 Form Letter: No
Contains Request(s): No Type: Web Form
Notes:

Correspondence Text

Since the YNPS has undertaken this concerning venture, YVCC (YosemiteValleyCampersCoalition) has the following points to consider:

1. Floating down the Merced River (a Scenic, Recreational, Cultural ORV) needs to be considered for preservation in the same light as the Tunnel View venue and other ideas. Merced River Floating has historically occurred from Clark's Bridge to Sentinell beach but the YNPS has prohibited floating from Clark's Bridge to Stoneman Bridge due to certain dangers related to fallen logs, which are few and easily managed. While you are cutting trees for tour bus passengers and other visitors, it is requested that you remove the very few fallen logs such as at the end of North Pines and upstream from the Ahwahnee Bridge and re-open rafting with personal watercraft/ rafts/devices (only) from Clark's Bridge downstream. The scenic view of the geology, hydrology, and greenery in Yosemite while floating has been iconially enjoyed for 90 years. Now, the YNPS is passing out \$175 violation fines on a routine basis if visitors are caught floating from Clarks Bridge to Stoneman Bridge causing much aggravation. Replace the prohibition signs with water safety signs and disclaimers but restore this scenic activity in the Park. While we're on the subject, omit the rafting concession entirely and let personal watercraft devices prevail. It is blight in progress to watch.
2. Put back the flood damaged campsites as part of the scenic plan because there is no more enjoyable scenic appreciation than affordable auto-based family camping looking up at our Yosemite each morning,

PEPC Project ID: 23811, DocumentID: 35583

Correspondence: 8

Author Information

Keep Private: Yes

Name:

Organization:

Organization Type: I - Unaffiliated Individual

Address:

E-mail:

Correspondence Information

Status: New

Park Correspondence Log:

Date Sent: 08/18/2010

Date Received: 08/18/2010

Number of Signatures: 1

Form Letter: No

Contains Request(s): No

Type: Web Form

Notes:

Correspondence Text

Yosemite should preserved in its natural state. We should not try to change it for the enjoyment of the public. In my opinion, it was set aside to keep it's natural beauty and majesty for generations to appreciate. It is NOT Disneyland that the main purpose is the enjoyment of the public. Disneyland is NOT natural but was created with the public's interest in mind. Mother Nature has a way to keep nature in balance. It is only when we try to control her that we have problems. I do agree, however, with letting natural fires burn...again, that is nature taking care of the underbrush and trees that are weak. But, as we have seen in the past...do we remember last August?...the park service has had problems controlling their control burns. Nature took care of campgrounds too close to the Merced River with the big flood. I do not like the idea of taking down trees just to improve the view. Let the public hike to find their own view. As for the view of Yosemite Falls, in May we took beautiful photographs of Upper, Middle, and Lower Yosemite Falls from the Yosemite Chapel. We were not looking for a photo opportunity, but when we walked out of the chapel, we were presented with a beautiful view. There are so many wonderful sights...the guests to Yosemite should not look at it as one giant photo op. Get out of your cars, walk around, find your own special views and truly experience Yosemite in its natural state. The park service needs to leave well enough alone!



08/06/2010 10:18 AM

To Yose_Planning@nps.gov

cc

bcc

Subject glacier point and tunnel view

SUM-S-004
Rec'd 8/18/10

I just heard on the radio that there are further plans to "expand the views" from both glacier point and the tunnel. I thought each of these projects had been completed. While I am greatly pleased with the expanded wheelchair access at glacier point (my husband is in a wheelchair) and the improved parking situation at the tunnel, I am not please by the removal of the trees. As any photographer knows, you need FOREGROUND to get good photos of scenery. By removing all of the trees that "block the view," you are also removing the only available foreground for those of us who enjoy getting creative with our photographs. And I don't know how many more trees you can remove without completely destroying the ambiance of the views. Thank you. Christine Gentry, loyal supporter of Yosemite (been there twice so far this year)

To YOSE Planning@NPS
cc
bcc
Subject Fw: From NPS.gov: tree trimming/removal

removal

SVM-S-# 006
Rec'd 8/13/2010



To yose_web_manager@nps.gov
cc
Subject From NPS.gov: tree trimming/removal

Mailing Address


states

Tree trimming for that perfect view is crazy. I'm told it is not just trimming but removing trees to make our valley look like a postcard. The visitors should buy the postcards instead. If we continue to cut down these old, wonderful trees when do we say "that's enough"? Those trees have been there before my birth, 72 years ago, and I love every one. This is my heritage. You already took down the one single tree that had grown up from the boulders so visitors could have their first view of the valley without obstruction. Let the valley grown and expand and get the autos out of the valley. Just use electric transportation. The valley was here first.

PEPC Project ID: 23811, DocumentID: 35583

Correspondence: 5

Author Information

Keep Private: No
Name: N/A N/A
Organization:
Organization Type: I - Unaffiliated Individual
Address: N/A
N/A, UN N/A
USA
E-mail: 

Correspondence Information

Status: New Park Correspondence Log:
Date Sent: Date Received: 08/18/2010
Number of Signatures: 1 Form Letter: No
Contains Request(s): No Type: E-mail
Notes:

Correspondence Text

Instead of the continual cycle of building to accommodate more sight-seers, why not tailor the number of viewers to existing view sites? Use an on-line reservation system to allow up to 1000 day travelers(let availability determine overnight guests), and keep view sites as at present. Expand and repair existing trails(e.g., the old stage routes from Wawona and Big Oak Flat) for convenient day use.

PEPC Project ID: 23811, DocumentID: 35583
Correspondence: 4

Author Information

Keep Private: No

Name: [REDACTED]

Organization:

Organization Type: I - Unaffiliated Individual

Address: [REDACTED]

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Correspondence Information

Status: New

Park Correspondence Log:

Date Sent: 08/17/2010

Date Received: 08/17/2010

Number of Signatures: 1

Form Letter: No

Contains Request(s): No

Type: Web Form

Notes:

Correspondence Text

While contemplating improvements in Yosemite Valley Camping facilities, PLEASE consider adding a single 'express' lane to the entry of Upper Pines Camp Ground! This last week we had occasion to make an 'ice' trip and upon our return to the entrance to Upper Pines, we were in a line of fourteen (14) vehicles, all but two (2) of which had passes hanging from their mirrors. We sat for 15 minutes waiting for those two to be signed in and the other twelve (12) getting waved through. We have been camping in Upper Pines for several decades, even back when it was Camp 14, and in prior years were allowed to use the exit lane to avoid the wait for sign-in vehicles. We were told that was no longer permitted (in fact witnessed one car just charging through). There are occasions when a vehicle excursion is appropriate though all in our group minimize those events. It is definitely NOT appropriate to penalize us by interminable waits at the entrance to Upper Pines.

Regards,

Don M. Evans
[REDACTED]

PEPC Project ID: 23811, DocumentID: 35583
Correspondence: 3

Author Information

Keep Private: Yes

Name: [REDACTED]

Organization:

Organization Type: I - Unaffiliated Individual

Address: [REDACTED]

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Correspondence Information

Status: New

Park Correspondence Log:

Date Sent: 08/17/2010

Date Received: 08/17/2010

Number of Signatures: 1

Form Letter: No

Contains Request(s): No

Type: Web Form

Notes:

Correspondence Text

While we, as lifetime visitors at the park, and members in long standing of the Yosemite Assn, believe the work to restore views in the park is warrented, we wonder why this outweighs the need for campsites. This issue has been on the books for years, since we lost the Rivers campgrounds. We have been given excuses for why this hasn't happened, and only the Sierra club, a radical group now only out for their bank accounts, has been allowed to have their opinions heard. We, the camping public have a right to reasonable places to camp. Instead of demolishing the rivers campgrounds completely, you had the choice of making them hard sided only, or motorized only. This would have enabled, with some enlarging of the spots, to have generators isolated in one campground, and if needed, just starting motors to leave if there were to be another flood. This was submitted to the general plan and not even commented on, but rejected. We were promised more campsites and were never given them, but instead, had more taken out. Then when they wanted to put a loop in Upper pines for hookups only, the sierra club got their way and stopped that project. The money was set aside in the flood relief budget to replace campgrounds, but no effort has been made to do this. It is nearly impossible to get a reservation. And if you have a larger rig, nearly impossible to find a site to fit in, because they continually move rocks and barriers into the path to allow it. Some basic work by volunteers could fix them so that more large rigs would fit. And opening up an area around the former Rivers campground would give room for many large rigs because the spaces could be made large and level. They would not be disturbing other campers while having to run their

generators and would make the experience a much better one. But instead, you make all the changes for day trippers, and visitors from abroad, and ignore the local and American population by making it reasonable to stay in a campground. The rest of the lodgings in the park have skyrocketed in price, so only camping is available to the vast majority of the population. Please consider as part of your improvement plan re-establishing more campsites for the real visiting public and we can too appreciate the new improved viewing sites that you will be making.

PEPC Project ID: 23811, DocumentID: 35583

Correspondence: 2

Author Information

Keep Private: No

Name: [REDACTED]

Organization:

Organization Type: I - Unaffiliated Individual

Address: [REDACTED]

E-mail:

Correspondence Information

Status: New

Park Correspondence Log:

Date Sent: 08/17/2010

Date Received: 08/17/2010

Number of Signatures: 1

Form Letter: No

Contains Request(s): No

Type: Web Form

Notes:

Correspondence Text

This is in regards to the first vista of Vernal Falls on the Mist trail, which is provided at the bridge over the Merced river on the early part of the trail. If this vista is not at this time being considered for upgrading, I urge you to check it out. When I first enjoyed this view shortly after WWII, it was complete with no vegetation blocking the view. Now, in my mid 80's, the bridge is about as far as I am able to hike. It would be nice to again see the Falls as I did years ago. Thank You for your consideration.

Bob Schmitz

PEPC Project ID: 23811, DocumentID: 35583

Correspondence: 1

Author Information

Keep Private: : No

Name:

Organization:

Organization Type: I - Unaffiliated Individual

Address:

E-mail:

Correspondence Information

Status: New

Park Correspondence Log:

Date Sent: 08/13/2010

Date Received: 08/13/2010

Number of Signatures: 1

Form Letter: No

Contains Request(s): No

Type: Web Form

Notes:

Correspondence Text

It appears as though some mistakes have been made and I hope it was not intentional to mislead the public. I have been coming to Yosemite with my family for over 30 years and know the park well. The 2009 view of El Capitan may be from a "similar" view, but that site on the Merced is one of my favorite views of El Capitan and the 2009 picture makes it look like the view is gone. It is NOT. So you ask yourself, why are the people using this misleading photo? They know it is not correct. Is there some other motive? Can we be honest with the public or do we need to use any means to get what we want? Are these true environmentalists and true lovers of Yosemite? Should I spend time reviewing the 297 page report? Will it be as misleading as the picture? Please change the picture. If you want, I have a beautiful picture of my wife, daughter and son in law on the banks of the Merced with El Capitan in the background from 2009 and it is nothing like the picture on the NPS site. I love Yosemite, I hope what you are doing is because you too love Yosemite.



San Joaquin Valley

AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT



September 17, 2010

Don Neubacher
US Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Yosemite National Park
P.O. Box 577
Yosemite, CA 95389

**Project: Scenic Vista Management Plan for Yosemite National Park – L7617
(YOSE)**

District Reference No: 20100685

Dear Mr. Neubacher:

The San Joaquin Valley Air Basin (SJVAB) is currently designated as extreme non-attainment for ozone and non-attainment for PM2.5 for federal standards. To aid the National Park Service (NPS) in reducing project related air impacts, the San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District (District) offers the following comments regarding the Scenic Vista Management Plan (Plan) for Yosemite National Park (Park):

- 1) Specific impacts on air quality will be dependent on the method used for disposing the accumulated natural vegetation. Though it is important to maintain scenic vistas, maintain property in a fire safe condition, and preserve wildlife habitat, the disposal method selected can adversely effect local and regional air pollution. The District recognizes the role of prescribed burning in maintaining a healthy ecosystem; however the District is concerned with the potential impacts of smoke on Park visitors, employees, and those that live in areas that may become impacted by smoke.
 - a) Although the proposed Alternatives identified in the Plan limit the use of prescribed burning to clear the various vistas and refers to the Yosemite Fire Management Plan (FMP) as the guidance document, the District asks the NPS to take a proactive role in reducing both the amount and impact of smoke. Proactive mitigation, including mechanical treatment and/or removal of fuels from planned burns, where possible, as well as, following through on the commitment

Sayed Sadredin
Executive Director/Air Pollution Control Officer

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Modesto, CA 95356-8718
Tel: (209) 557-6400 FAX: (209) 557-6475

Central Region (Main Office)
1990 E. Gettysburg Avenue
Fresno, CA 93726-0244
Tel: (559) 230-6000 FAX: (559) 230-6061

Southern Region
34946 Flyover Court
Bakersfield, CA 93308-9725
Tel: 661-392-5500 FAX: 661-392-5585

to follow Title 17 of the California Code of Regulations (further discussed below), will reduce both the amount and impact of smoke.

- b) Alternatives to burning may include chipping, mulching, composting, or recycling through a local landfill or disposal service. In some areas, chipped vegetation is being used as biomass-fuel for producing electricity. Though emissions are created from equipment and vehicular traffic often associated with utilizing alternative methods, the public still benefits by having the vegetation removed rather than being burned in the Park.
 - c) Please also consider the number of days suitable for prescribed fire is limited by meteorological conditions and the air shed's capacity to handle smoke impacts, therefore, the number of opportunities for prescribed fire in a given time period or season tend to be fairly small.
- 2) The California Air Resources Board (ARB) Smoke Management Guidelines for Agricultural and Prescribed Burning (Title 17, Subchapter 2, of the California Code of Regulations) requires the District to develop a Smoke Management Program (SMP) to minimize the production of smoke from all open burning, including prescribed and hazard reduction burning. The Guidelines include a number of required elements such as the District's burn authorization system, regulations to minimize smoke from burning, procedures for conducting various burn activities, meteorological and monitoring data criteria, and several other factors. The District adopted District Rule 4106 (Prescribed Burning and Hazard Reduction Burning) as part of the District's SMP. If the use of fire, whether a natural ignition or prescribed burn, is to be used in the implementation of the Plan, the burn shall be conducted in accordance with the requirements of Title 17, Subchapter 2 and District Rule 4106.

The Smoke Management Guidelines can be found on the ARB website at:
<http://www.arb.ca.gov/smp/regs/regs.htm>

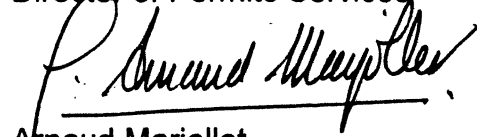
For more information on the District's SMP, please visit the District's website at:
http://www.valleyair.org/BurnPrograms/Burn_Programs.htm

A copy of District Rule 4106 can be found on the District's website at:
<http://www.valleyair.org/rules/currentrules/r4106.pdf>.

The District thanks you for the opportunity to provide comments on the Plan and looks forward with working with the NPS to ensure that the Plan does not severely impact the air quality in and around the Park. District staff is available to meet with you or your staff to further discuss the regulatory requirements that are associated with this project. If you have any questions or require further information, please call Jessica Willis at (559) 230-5818 and provide the reference number at the top of this letter.

Sincerely,

David Warner
Director of Permits Services

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Arnaud Marjollet", written over a horizontal line.

Arnaud Marjollet
Permit Services Manager

DW:jw

cc: Errol Villegas, Manager, Strategies and Incentives
Steve Shaw, Supervising Air Quality Specialist, Strategies and Incentives
Daniel Martinez, Supervising Inspector, Compliance

FAX: (559) 485-9968

*Racial
9/7/10
Sc*

March 10, 2009

Superintendent David Uberuaga
Yosemite National Park
P. O. Box 577
Yosemite National Park, CA 95389

Attn: Scenic Vista Management Plan

Re: Restoration of Hetch Hetchy's lost
three falls panorama

Dear Superintendent Uberuaga:

Scenic magnetism pulls first time visitors to our precious Park. Photos and travelogues play poor second fiddles to first hand experiencing Mother Nature's gargantuan superlatives. Cliffs, trees, waterfalls and canyons, she categorically supersized them. Except for really big trees, both Yosemite Valley and her more petite sister, Hetch Hetchy Valley, boast all. Unfortunately, "We, the People" a century ago deemed Little Sister an expendable Second Fiddle. Some of the baser strands woven early into the basketry of our continuing Hetch Hetchy dilemma: Corporate Greed, Political Bribery, Personal Greed, Fantasy Landscape Engineering, Political Treason and Marketplace Bait 'N Switch.

No longer can we experience Hetch Hetchy like poet and Sierra Clubber Harriet Monroe's 1909 visit:

From a broad cliff above the valley we look out over a Vale of Cashmere, the river winding and circling in wide curves through meadows vividly green. We go down to the valley floor, and cross the meadow through tall grass and lovely flowers. We pass a high tumbling water-fall, and reach our spectacular camp under The Colonel, which looms up skyward almost as grandly as El Capitan.

Since the damming, most visitors to our precious Park have, unfortunately, shunned Little Sister. As chronicled by San Francisco Chronicle nature writer Harold Gilliam in his annotation of photographer Robert Cameron's 1983 aerial masterpiece, Above Yosemite:

Superintendent David Uberuaga
Re: Restoration of Hetch Hetchy's lost panorama
March 10, 2009
Page Two

Before Hetch Hetchy was dammed in the 1920s, **proponents of the dam argued that visitors would flock to enjoy the beautiful lake.** But the reservoir must be drawn down most of the time to supply water and flood-control capacity, and **the banks are hardly inviting. Hetch Hetchy has few visitors.**

Those few visitors can still experience Wapama, the valley's gargantuan cascade. A windshield, naked eye, partial view from the dam site (Image 1). A hiker's telescopic eye, partial view from along the White Wolf-Pate Valley trail (Image 2). An in-your-face, full frontal showerhead view from the base of the falls (Image 3). BUT the long ago actions of the City of San Francisco and the continuing scenic subservience of the National Park Service have rendered it virtually impossible for a first time visitor to be mesmerized by the most striking North Wall panorama (Image 4).

This superlative view sure captured the attention of Josiah D. Whitney, the Harvard professor who headed the California Geological Survey, and John Muir, our precious Park's Numero Uno naturalist who founded and headed the Sierra Club.

WHITNEY (1868):

The walls of this Valley are not quite as high as those of the Yosemite; but, still, anywhere else than in California, they would be considered as wonderfully grand. On the north side of the Hetch Hetchy is a perpendicular bluff, the edge of which is 1,800 feet above the Valley, and having a remarkable resemblance to El Capitan. In the spring, when the snows are melting, a large stream is precipitated over this cliff (i.e. Tueeulala Fall), falling at least 1,000 feet perpendicular. The volume of water is very large, and the whole of the lower part of the Valley is said to be filled with its spray. A little farther east is the Hetch Hetchy Fall (i.e. Wapama), the counterpart of the Yosemite. The height is 1,700 feet. It is not quite perpendicular; but it comes down in a series of beautiful cascades, over a steeply inclined face of rock. **The volume of water is much larger than that of the Yosemite Fall, and, in the spring, its noise can be heard for miles.**

Superintendent David Uberuaga
Re: Restoration of Hetch Hetchy's lost panorama
March 10, 2009
Page Three

MUIR (1912):

On the opposite side of the Valley, facing Kolana, there is a counterpart of the El Capitan that rises sheer and plain to a height of 1800 feet, and over its massive brow flows a stream which makes the most graceful fall I have ever seen. From the edge of the cliff to the top of an earthquake talus it is perfectly free in the air for a thousand feet before it is broken into cascades among talus boulders. It is in all its glory in June, when the snow is melting fast, but fades and vanishes toward the end of summer.

So fine a fall might well seem sufficient to glorify any valley; but here, as in Yosemite, Nature seems in nowise moderate, for a short distance to the eastward of Tueeulala booms and thunders the great Hetch Hetchy Fall, Wapama, so near that you have both of them in full view from the same standpoint. It is the counterpart of the Yosemite Fall, but has a much greater volume of water, is about 1700 feet in height, and appears to be nearly vertical, though considerably inclined, and is dashed into huge outbounding bosses of foam on projecting shelves and knobs. **No two falls could be more unlike—Tueeulala out in the open sunshine descending like thistledown; Wapama in a jagged, shadowy gorge roaring and thundering, pounding its way like an earthquake avalanche.**

(Written during the final battle for the Valley, Muir fails to acknowledge his literary debt to Professor Whitney.)

The NPS faces a daunting task should it unilaterally seek to restore the lost vista for our visitors. Engineering reality would be a piece of cake. Political reality may be too tough a nut for even Secretary Salazar to crack. The key question for the Service: Is visitor access to the alternate vista point for Images 5 & 6 worth the effort?

Superintendent David Uberuaga
Re: Restoration of Hetch Hetchy's lost panorama
March 10, 2009
Page Four

ENGINEERING. The destination is only 0.4 crow flight mile from the residential loop road. Thanks to the City's decision to raise O'Shaughnessy Dam in the 1930's, much of the longer hiking/scrambling distance is on the road which accesses the South Wall quarry area. Image 7 was taken from this zone before the bigger dam added nearly 100' to the reservoir's level. (Note: The lowest portion of Nameless Cascade which is shown in the left portion of Image 6 is appreciably shorter than when it was captured at the left margin of Image 7.)

Improvements needed along the remainder of the route: (1) A pedestrian gap adjoining the locked vehicle/livestock gate; (2) stairs up to the quarry's old roadbed; (3) small bridge and causeway spanning the quarry's seasonal stream and boggy floor; (4) a trail with some stairways to replace the remaining scramble. With these enhancements, the hike to the giant panorama could prove less strenuous than the somewhat longer hike on the pedestrian "freeway" from the parking lot up to the Mariposa Grove's Grizzly Giant.

POLITICS. The City folks sold "We, the People" a fanciful bill of goods when they promised us a visitor friendly valley. We have almost reached the Big Poach centennial and, even now, Little Sister lacks any semblance of a visitor center. She richly deserves, of course, an architecturally elegant, comprehensive one, perhaps modeled upon Mono Lake's inspirational facility. Ideally, it would be sited atop the dam's South buttress, which was flattened for the City's aggregate plant. The center's design would have to be worthy of the breathtaking vistas it would command.

Just three years post-poach, Chief O'Shaughnessy arrogantly proclaimed:

**Hetch Hetchy is ours. We'll do what we wish
with it. We'll build where we wish first. It is
ours and no one will take it away from us.**

(Quoted in the Oakland Tribune, October 7, 1916)

"We'll do what we wish" has pretty much been the City's attitude in dissuading visitors ever since. Section 9.(p) of the 1913 Raker Act obligated the City, for example, to construct "a scenic road or trail" on the North Wall extending at least into the Tiltill Creek drainage. But such a duty conflicted with the City's de facto municipal annexation mindset. The foot-dragging delay compelled Congressman Lewis Cramton of Michigan to

Superintendent David Uberuaga
Re: Restoration of Hetch Hetchy's lost panorama
March 10, 2009
Page Five

administer a most unwelcome reality check. The trail was finally constructed under a 1930 agreement. It permits visitors only the in-your-face, full frontal showerhead view of Wapama. (Image 3)

Restore Hetch Hetchy's focused program has pushed our dilemma upward onto many more personal sonar screens. Consequently, the City finds itself in the uncomfortable position of having to maintain a positive spin on its "wonderful" stewardship of our national treasure. I suppose it's no wonder that its PR efforts omit the view which so captivated both Whitney and Muir.

SCRAMBLE. The Superintendency of our precious Park must be one of the NPS's juiciest plums. The Mariposa Gazette recently reported that yours is an interim appointment while the Service selects a permanent replacement for Superintendent Tollefson. Presumably in your "acting" capacity you lack authority to address the NPS's subservient role with respect to the Hetch Hetchy Valley. Furthermore, the City's protectors could not be expected to look favorably upon any independent NPS efforts within the municipal annex. On the other hand, you have the unfettered right, like any visitor, to enjoy a scramble of your choosing. After experiencing the alternate vista point, perhaps you could then report:

Hey, Mr. Regional Director, at the urging of some locals, look what I discovered!

I would be honored to lead any interested NPS personnel on a scramble to the Three Falls Panorama. Among my many personal ties to our precious Park: Two years as a seasonal ranger on the Mather District in the 1960s; Father Stan Fiske – four seasons with the NPS in the 1930s with jobs ranging from laborer to fire lookout to ranger (Wawona District); Grandfather Will Fiske – career Forest Service (Stanislaus), with one Spring (1933) with NPS as an "Axeman"; Grandfather Emmet Preston – two seasons (1906, 1908) as a company wrangler guiding dudes to Little Yosemite and Glacier Point and one Winter (1933-34) as an NPS "laborer".

My maternal cousin, [REDACTED] probably would provide a richer experience. In addition to our Grandpa Emmet, Rod's personal ties include: Father Eldridge Leonard

Superintendent David Uberuaga
Re: Restoration of Hetch Hetchy's lost panorama
March 10, 2009
Page Six

who worked on the Wawona Tunnel's construction crew; Great grandfather Archie Leonard who was one of TR's ranger-guides during his 1903 "bully" tour with Muir; Great grandmother Susie Lawrence Leonard who was one of the Yosemite region's noted basket weavers.

Anyone interested in what we both consider a most worthwhile scramble should call either [REDACTED] or myself [REDACTED] res. [REDACTED] Thank you for your consideration of our Park's dilemma.

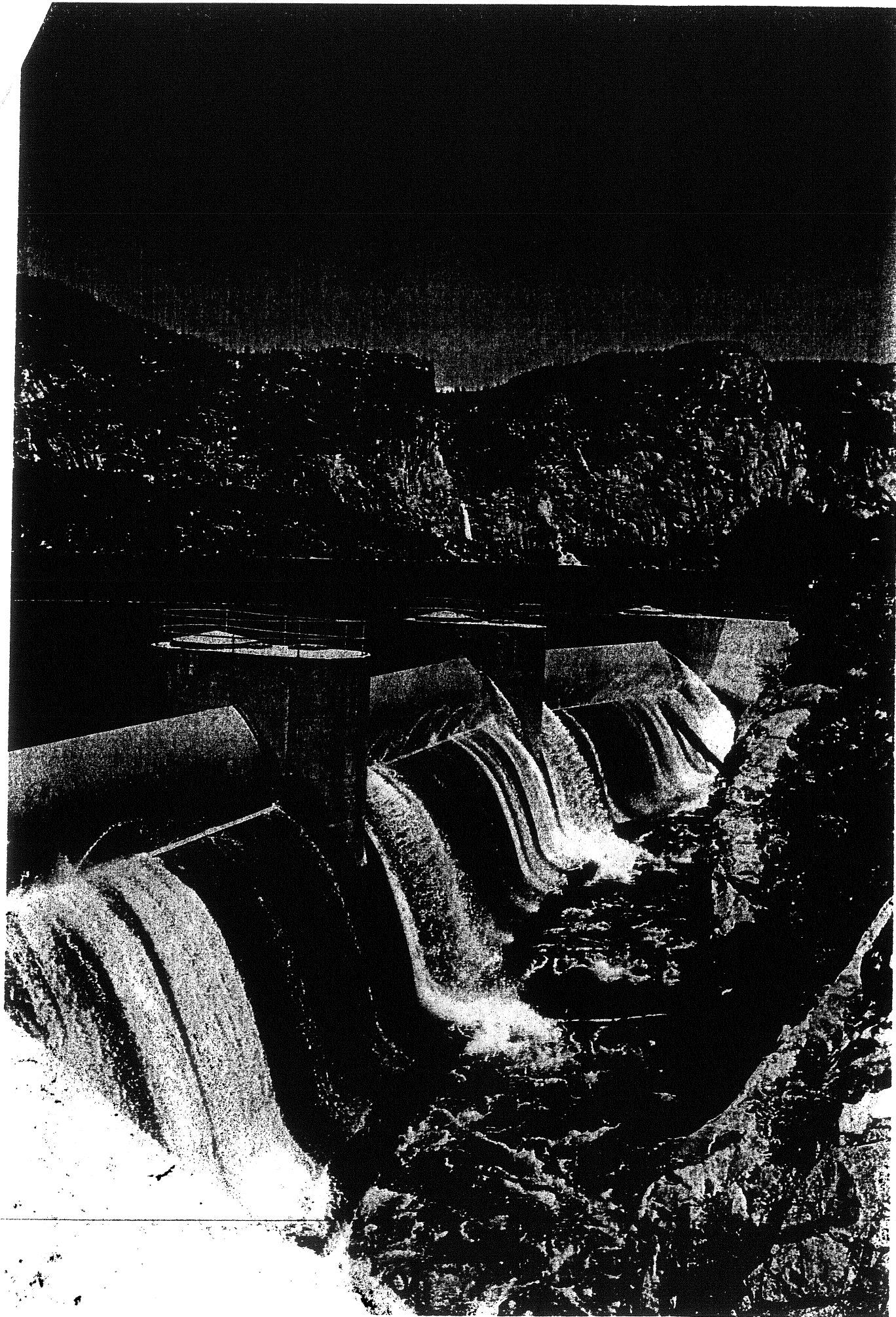
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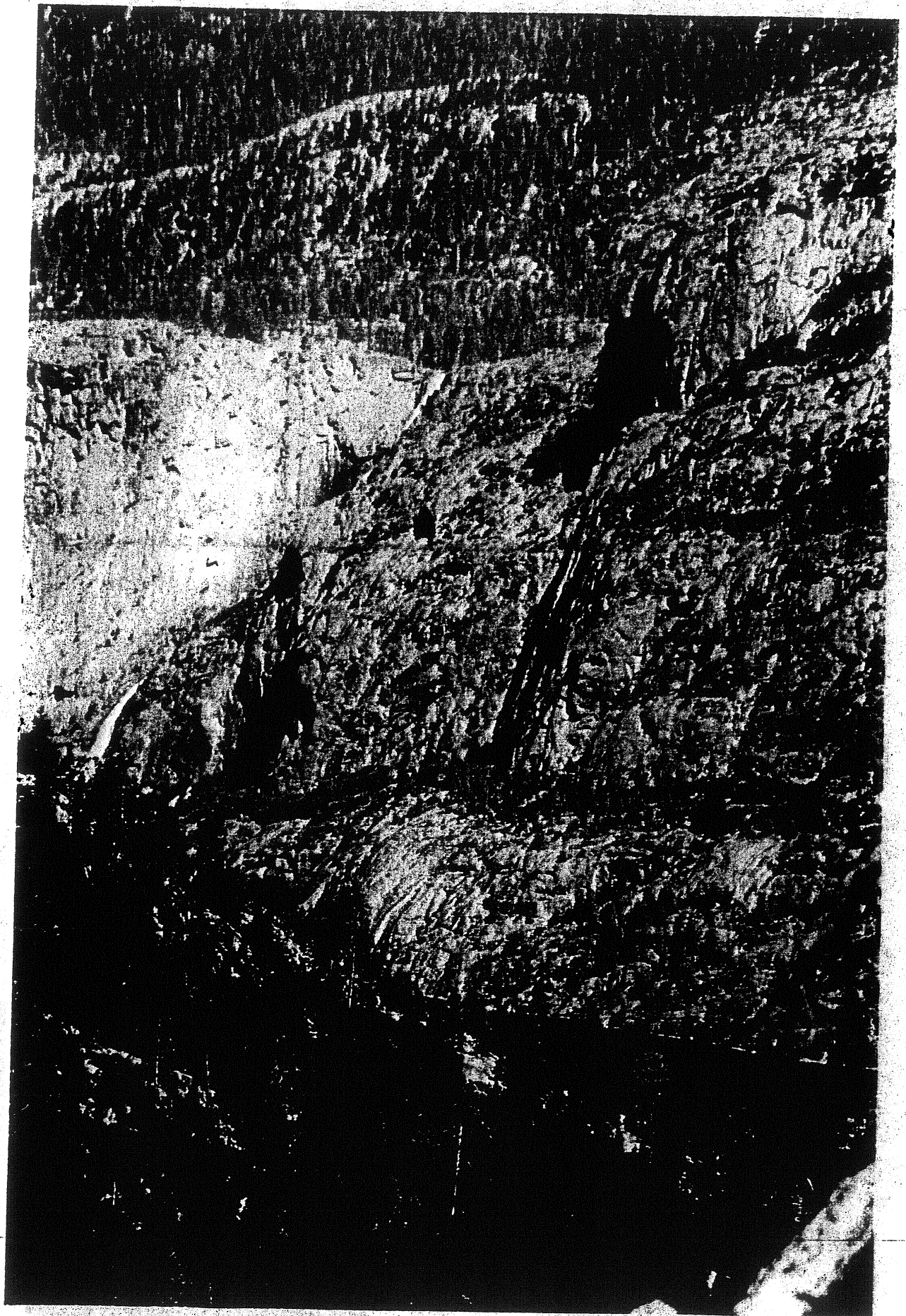
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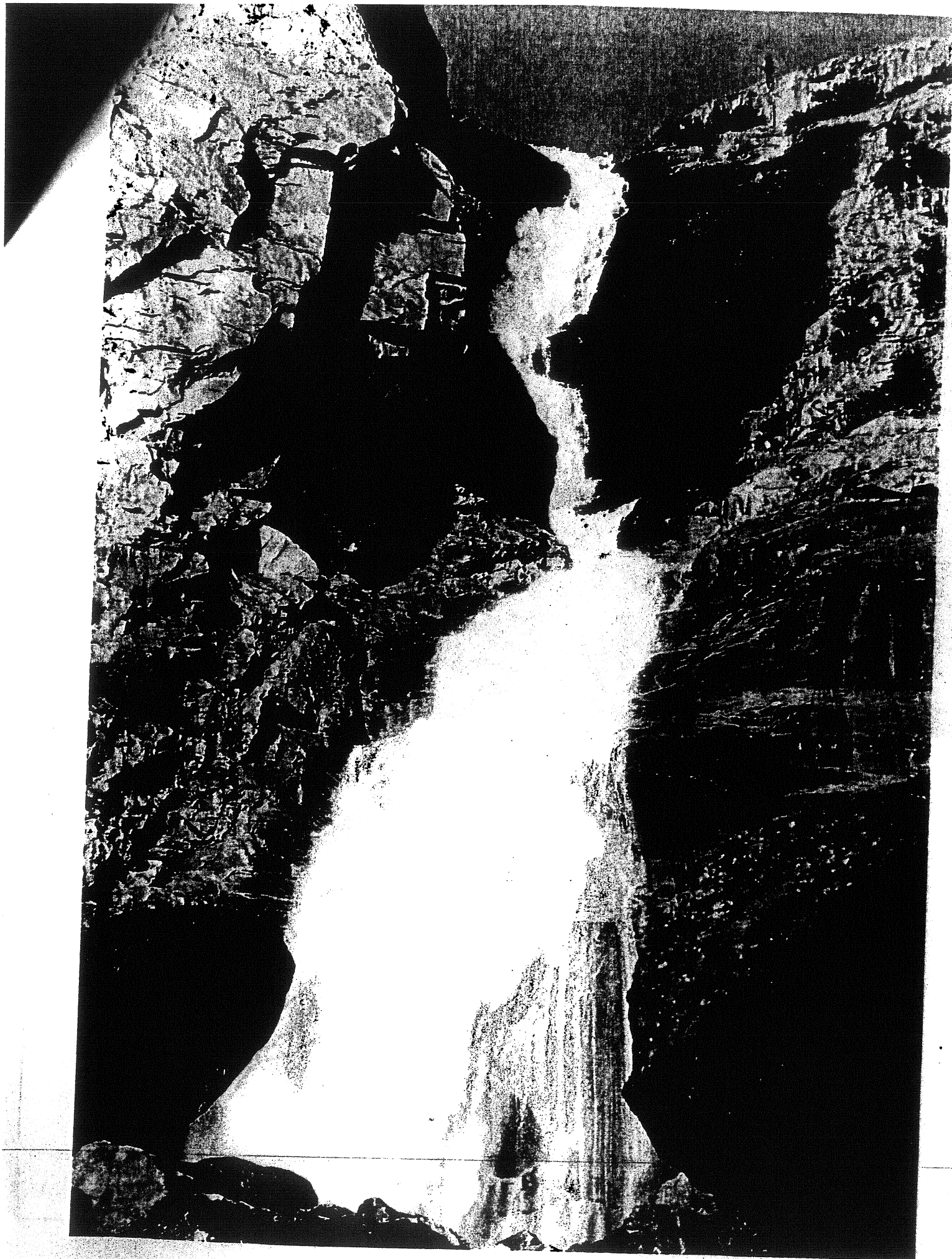
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Encs.: Photographs (7)

[REDACTED]







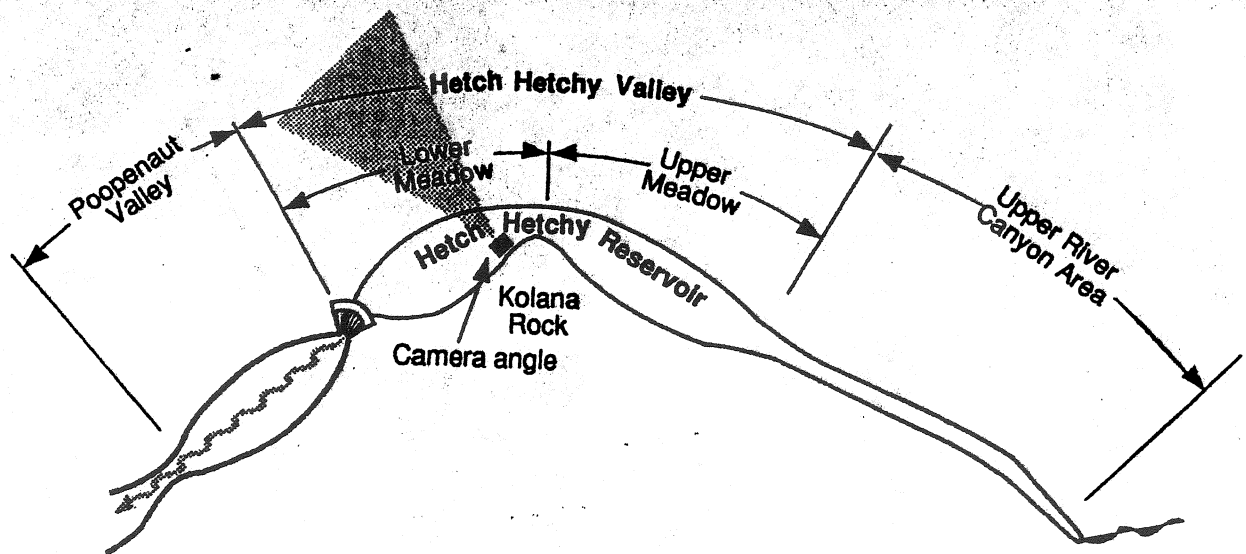
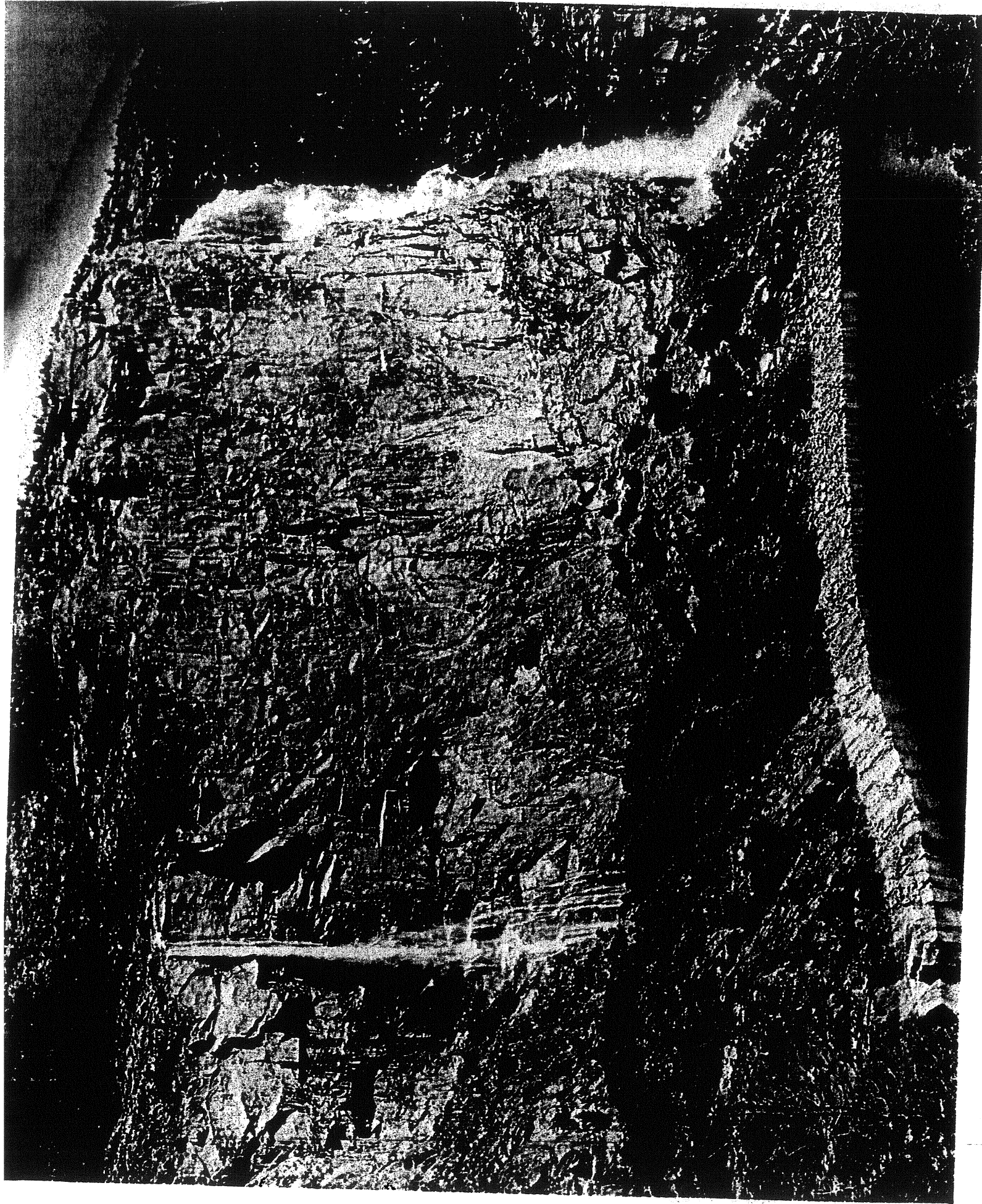
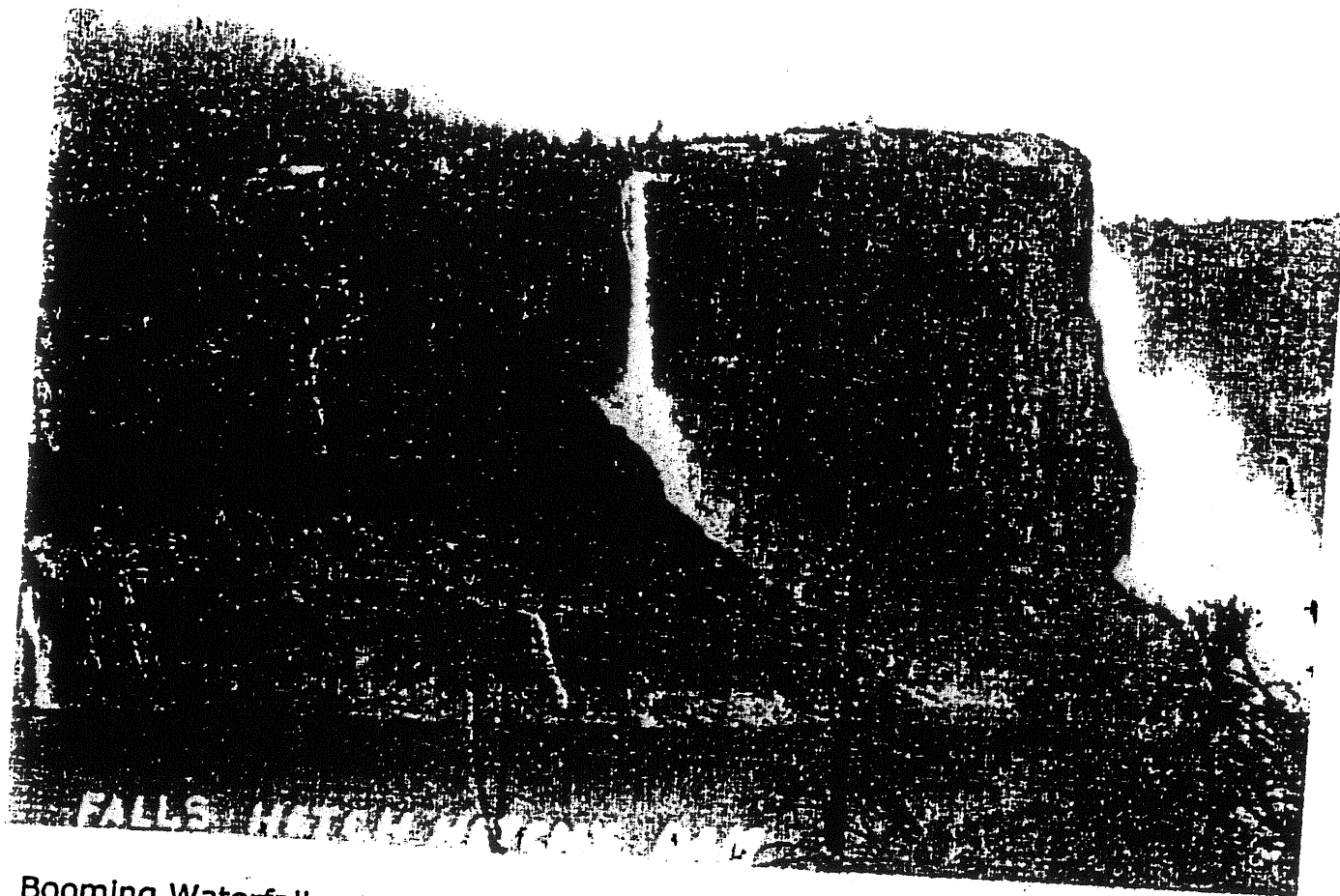


Exhibit 10
Tueeulala and Wapama Falls





Restore Hetch Hetchy



Booming Waterfalls at Hetch Hetchy - early 1900s - photographer and source unknown

-
- [Artistic Visions](#)
 - [Return to Restore Hetch Hetchy Home Page](#)
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To get involved in the effort to restore Hetch Hetchy, contact Restore Hetch Hetchy at: info@hetchhetchy.org, 6114 La Salle Ave. #457, Oakland, CA 94611. Telephone: (510) 655-1876.

For inquiries about this website, contact the webmaster, at: webmaster@hetchhetchy.org
